

NOVEMBER 1958

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# High

the NEW

THE MAN'S HOME COMPANION

## THE CAUTIOUS BACHELOR

BY SAREL EIMERL

Some MISS-APPREHENSIONS Of  
An Unattached Male

## TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING

BY ART PAUL

Our Bosom Pals Are Getting  
Out Of Hand

## TIME OFF FOR HUSBANDS

BY MORT GOLDING

Do Separate Vacations  
Save Marriages?



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NOVEMBER, 1958

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THE MAN'S HOME COMPANION

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Shed a tear for the man who rushes from the rat race in the city to the killing pace of suburban home sweet home

## THE EMASCULATION OF THE SUBURBAN MALE

by ERIC MAYNE

**O**UT in God's country, the suburbs, where city dust and delinquency rarely reach, everybody is living high and jocosely on the hog—all except the householder, the sturdy American male facing the bills, who is slowly being unmanned by the mistress of his hearth.

It's a pretty soft hearth her sweet talk earned for her. To get her man to the suburbs, she'd painted a glowing picture of ease and trees and highbells on the lawn—and sold a bill of goods only a bumpkin would buy. For instead of the wagonload of peace and quiet her yokelmate thought he was getting, he finds himself suckered into a rat race in some ways worse than the one he left behind at the office. All day long he knocks himself out so that evenings and week ends he can enjoy the silken repose of the country squire, but comes the evening and week end and the darling of his bosom has a program mapped out that would sap the strength of a bullock and undermine the nervous system of a Mark IV tank.

More often than not, the dear little cupcake is tired pressing the buttons that do her chores, so the weary wage earner is cheated out of going out on the nine square feet of terrace with the cool drink he craves. Instead, he is asked to put the kids to bed or set the table or put the TV dinner (all prepared and packaged at the Supermarket—just heat) in the oven because the Malarkeys are coming over in their brand new twenty-three feet of maroon convertible, which is just the kind of dreamboat the winks, because, after all, dear, I do need a car of my own, even other woman in the community has one, and if you loved me you'd do as much for us as your husbands do for

them, and I don't see why getting the new carpeting and the new draper and a new outfit for me should make any difference because it isn't as if you have to pay all at once, all you need is a down payment and a little each month takes care of it and besides tomorrow we're going to this and next day it's that and the week end yakety yak yak.

And that sterling bucko, the suburban male, already numb, raises his drooping shoulders to take another evening's or week end's punishment. He's praying for the round to ring so he can get at least a minute's rest between rounds, but there's no timekeeper and no referee, and he knows the fight is lost anyway. But soon he'll have his rest. A lot of it. An eternity. By the time he's forty or forty-five he's a physical and nervous wreck while the little darling, ironically enough, is blooming, her eyes bright with anticipation of how fetching she'll look in black, if it's the right model. She didn't read her Kinsey for nothing.

But that's not for a few years yet. Now our Swallow Valley vacquero is patently alive, and, looking at him, you'd never know his hormones are waning. Physically, he is taller, heavier and—until claimed by Ucker Gulch and Cardiac Valley—healthier than any American male before him. He has more money in the bank, more gadgets in the home—and more liquor in the closet to help him forget he's not the man he pretends he is. What he is is a sad statistic: emptying his veins before his time because, though he knows all the put answers, he's afraid to ask himself the right questions.

Consider him closely, this smooth, glib glob of gelatin who regards himself the essence of practicality—though

he's overextended financially; is certain in his heart of hearts he's an irresistible love pirate—though he shrinks from honest sex; is convinced he's an independent-minded man capable of great decisions—though he doesn't dare entertain a thought that conflicts with the herd; and prides himself on his worldly sophistication—though he's a yoked to end all yokels, because he buys at the cost of life and happiness a pot of fool's gold.

And the louder he yells to deny it, the more he knows it is true.

For a mess of porridge, cottage and club, he has yielded his birthright as a free-wheeling, free-banking individual, and for this he has been paying a price equal to that Mephistopheles exacted from Dr. Faustus. And all, he rationalizes to himself—quoting his favorite news magazine (*everybody in his circle reads it*) while imbibing his favorite drink (*everybody in his circle drinks it*)—for love of home, country, and the little woman. This merely compounds his delusion. He makes none of them better, happier, more loving.

But he's in there pitching. He takes pills to keep him awake and pills to put him to sleep, pills to make him "regular" and pills to increase his virility, pills to improve his appetite and pills to help him lose weight. And, of course, pills to bring down his blood pressure. The only kind of pill he doesn't take—it's too bitter a concoction—is the pill to make him pause, look around and assy himself. So he races dizzily on the edge of the precipice, a slave to amortization, a statistic in search of the heart disease actuarian, and his only solace is that the man next to

him is caught up in the same lethal rat race.

This is not only his solace but also his undoing.

Like the dog, which is the only animal in the world that prefers man to its own breed, man can't get along without man. Man is a gregarious animal. He has always, even before his harsh naturalists became recognizable words, tended to band together, in little groups and then larger groups and finally great communities. There is nothing wrong in this; complete withdrawal and seclusion, we are told by psychiatrists, is unhealthy, "sick." But today, in Suburbia, man has not merely joined the group, he has let himself be submerged by it. For the approval of his neighbor, he has let himself be swallowed by the group to the point where he no longer has an identity. He goes to the suburb in search of identity, but he gives it up as soon as he buys his second commutation ticket.

By this time—he moved there in favorable weather—he has acquired a barbecue, charcoal and tongs. Also a white chef's cap, so that when special guests drop in he can put on a "lord-of-the-manor" act. It doesn't faze him that at the very same moment his special guests can gaze out on forty-seven other white chef's caps bobbing and gnatflecting over the landscape, making obeisance to the iron tripod, one of the minor deities of Suburbia. By this time neither our suburbanite nor his guests can count to forty-seven, anyhow, all having been prepared for this ritual by an earlier rite, called by our host with original, high-blown wit, "a libation."

Now, a drink, imbibed with pleasure and moderation, has been one of man's best friends for thousands of years. But, like the barbecue, in Suburbia drink has acquired a special significance depriving man of his greatest endowment, self. His drink is no longer of his own choice; he is serving exactly what the other forty-seven neighboring hosts are serving. Two seasons ago it was the dry martini. This season it's Scotch, or, in warm weather, gin and tonic. The elite, with considerable hauteur, are making a fetish of vodka with the tonic. Of course, it depends on whether your community is advance guard, rear guard, center or avant guard. But when Madison Avenue decreed that the dry martini was passé, it was inevitable that Suburbia, in slavish deference to the Great Arbiter, meekly follow suit.

But our hero, pouring and imbibing the libations, has no thought for such subversion. True, his cardiac system is slipping, but he can hold his head high. He has selflessly fulfilled all the required formalities and fripperies of the tribe and he can now savor the moment thoroughly. Like his forty-seven neighbors, he has spent the appropriate time at the Supermarket; the allotted hours mowing the grass, weeding the weeds, gardening the garden, washing the car, hosing the hose, washing the other car, if there is one, and if there isn't, promising to get one soon to keep the peace, straightening the things in the cellar, cleaning the utensils in the garage, worrying about the roof, almost breaking his neck on the ladder, tripping over the kids' toys, sandpapering the sudden bump on the rumpus room floor, getting the kids' lunch because the little woman decided it would be a good time to take a beauty nap while the clothes were in the automatic washing machine and the dishes were in the automatic dishwasher and anything else she had to do was in the other automatic equipment, for which he had to dole out only a little good red arterial blood each month.

But he will be adequately reimbursed. This coming Tuesday night he will report to his neighbors at the PTA meeting that, ignoring his tensions and flickering pump, he passed up fishing to fulfill the tribal ukases, and he will

win their immediate, unthinking approval. Besides the PTA, which he thoroughly detests attending, he can make the same report to the Citizens' Tax Committee, the Committees on Playgrounds, Mental Health, Sewage and Drainage, Highways, and the Committee to Keep Strangers Off OUR Beach (Lake, Pond, Golf Course, Street Corners, depending on your community) and the Committee to Study Indian Artifacts (in case they are ever uncovered in the town square)—all of which committees he must attend within the next two weeks and which he thoroughly detests.

But by all these sacrifices he is pleasing not only his neighbors but his doting little woman. Any month now, all this impeccable behavior will earn him a nomination for THE CLUB. Now his wife will not only have as fine wall-to-wall carpeting and as many automatic thingamabobs as the neighbors, but Saturday nights she will be able to go dancing at THE CLUB, and some Sunday afternoons ("I didn't marry you just to slave over a hot stove") the whole family might drop over to THE CLUB for dinner. (Twenty-four dollars should do it, with tip.) All this, mind you, for an initiation fee and annual assessment of less blood than it takes to float one of Junior's boats in the bathtub.

But it is not all sacrifice. Our sturdy suburban male will be able to flex his muscles on THE CLUB golf course each week end (somehow he'd have to sandwich it in with his other chores) and he'll be able to shoot the breeze with guys he doesn't care too much for but who are watching him as closely as he's watching them. Just to make sure everybody is following the Community Line.

The Community Line doesn't apply to everything, of course; it permits a certain individual leeway. It has to be followed only as regards picture windows, home furnishings, interior decorating, menus, horticulture, favorite recordings, hi-fi equipment, liquor, canapés, party favors, holiday decorations, Christmas cards, Mother's Day gifts, the kids' school curricula, newspapers and magazines (who has time for books?), TV programs and whitewall tires. Also repartee, proper bidding at bridge, when it's permissible to make a pass at the opposite sex (any time), what the appropriate riposte is if discovered, and what the latest psychoanalytic theories are regarding the libido. In a way, this makes for a happy clan. Everybody sing "Togetherness." And with everybody getting the same thoughts packaged for them by the same newspapers and news magazines—why, there are no arguments, no disputes, no differences of opinion, no controversies. And, of course, no thinking.

Thus has Suburbia, with the little woman prompting hell-for-leather on the sidelines, whittled down the ego and the individuality of that strapping species of *homo sapiens*, the American male. But—just ask him—he knows what he's doing. After all, it's for the family and—never forget this—primarily for the little woman. Ah, yes, the woman. Love. Venus. Sex.

Let's draw the curtain a little and peek in. Let's see if our dynamic suburban male, who has let others decide for him how to dress and how to act and what to read and do and think—let's see if the whittling down of his individuality has had an effect in the region of Eros.

He knows, let's admit forthwith, how to please a woman, and he realizes that proper love-making begins long before the lights go out. He plans his attack as efficiently as he prepares an advertising campaign. Set the stage, set up the little doll. Soften her up. None of this crude claiming of a man's rights. So what if he puts on the apron now and then and hides his pants? Maybe she'd like breakfast in

(Continued on page 43)





Helga was reasonable,  
but never free

## ARTY IRL

**P**ROBABLY the only person in New York who is not worried about anything is Helga Darten. She has no job worthy of the name and no desire for one. She has tried dress designing, the only field in which she has ever professed any interest, and, having tried it, seems content to rest on her reputation. She could get married, but she's already tried it. She has become instead a party girl. —Helga came to New York in 1947 as a dress designer. She had graduated from high school that summer, gone to Dallas and got a job at the stocking counter in Neiman-Marcus. She held the job for ten weeks, then took her savings and bought a bus ticket to New York. The first day in the city she walked up Madison Avenue and, after calling at several shops, landed a position as a dress designer in one of the small, exclusive, women's stores. Her only references were a few employee identification materials from Dallas, and three drawings of smart looking dress patterns. The job lasted just nine weeks. At the end of that time the proprietor of the store had learned that Helga not only had not designed any dresses, but that she wasn't likely to. He fired her. She hasn't held a position in New York since.

(Continued on next page)

by EDMUND G. LOVE



'Oh for Pete's sake, Cynthia, nag, nag, nag, nag!'

Today, Helga is twenty-seven years old. She is a natural honey-blond with long, straight hair that is always done up in the most fashionable manner. She is fairly short and has a full figure that seems a little inclined toward hippiness. She has the traditional peaches and cream complexion, the high cheekbones, broad face, and wide, saucerlike, blue eyes of the Hollander, but her speech, still has much of East Texas in it. She always dresses tastefully, whether she is lounging in her apartment or dining out in New York's best restaurants.

It should be emphasized, at the very beginning, that Helga's morals are about average. She is not a prostitute, in any sense of the word. She has achieved her present comfort through an assiduous application of certain standing operating procedures which are sometimes handed from working girl to working girl in New York. It is true that she has gone a little beyond some of the methods used by other girls, but her own devices are nothing more than an extension of them. The two simple axioms of life in the big city, for a girl who wants to live a comfortable existence, are to get as many free meals as possible, and to find a roommate to share the rent of an apartment. It was through one of these roommates that I came to know Helga.

Helga makes between \$170 and \$200 a month, and banks about \$150 of it. Virtually her only expenditures are for taxicabs and hair-dos. Her income derives from the dress designing, which she still continues, and from rent, with a few dollars coming from other business ventures. To Helga, however, dress designing is not exactly what the phrase implies. She pursues it only for the purpose of maintaining her reputation. Such money as she gets is strictly incidental, and she has no real desire to become successful. In an average week, she will draw between thirty and forty designs. Of these she sells around fifteen. She gets one dollar for each design that is accepted, a figure that would be considered absurd if it were known to her friends, but it satisfies Helga. Her approach to the work is offhand. She simply curls up in the corner of the sofa in her living room at odd moments and draws up her designs when she has nothing else to do. She works with a drawing tablet, pencil, crayons, and five or six fashion magazines. The sketches that she makes rapidly on her tablet are almost exact duplicates of those she sees in the magazines. She adds a bow here, and a belt there. She

changes the buttons from one side to the other, or puts the neckline from one dress on another. Sometimes she takes an ultra-fashionable model and turns it into a dress for a little girl. Sometimes she takes a little girl's dress and transforms it into an ultra-fashionable model. She usually changes the material and the color, using pastel shades where dark colors are called for, and vice versa. In an hour Helga will finish five or six of her designs, tossing them on the floor as fast as she finishes them. When she tires, she simply gathers up what she has done, goes through the designs, picks out the ones that she thinks have merit, and throws the rest away. The next afternoon, after lunch, she will drop the whole production at a convenient office. If any of them are bought, she accepts the check calmly. If they are rejected, she shrugs her shoulders. She sells her sketches to a wide variety of markets, mostly to the mass dress manufacturers.

Helga lives in a dilapidated old apartment building on West 46th Street, not far from Eighth Avenue. She has lived in it for seven years. The rent is \$55 a month, low because of rent control and the condition of the building—the building is at least eighty years old. It has been allowed to run down badly. It is held together by magic and allowed to exist by an unusually benevolent interpretation of the building code. The floors all slant in different directions. The walls bulge and the plaster has cracked and fallen off the laths in many places. On the fourth floor, the water trickles from the corroded plumbing. On the fifth floor it drips. The walls and ceilings have been covered, year after year, with new layers of paint or thick wallpaper until there is some question as to whether the building is holding the decorations up, or whether the decorations are supporting the building. On the way up from the ground floor, every step in the five flights of stairs to Helga's apartment sags under the weight of the climber. Most people, after reaching the sanctity of Helga's apartment for the first time, go immediately to the window and look for the fire escape. One rather carefree visitor, after descending to the street one night, turned in a false alarm from the nearest corner. On a subsequent visit he posted a sign over Helga's bar, informing the guests that, in case of fire, it would take Ladder Company Number Four seventeen minutes to get a ladder up to the window.

(Continued on page 48)



# d is for diane

... a lovely young lady—playful, sensitive, kind, a child of nature. Other girls may be attracted by the bright lights and the glamour of the big town, by Rolls Royces and minks and jewels, but not Diane. The only jewels that mean anything to her are the stars twinkling in the midnight sky. She is the kind of girl you'd bring home to mother—so sweet, so demure; that's Diane Wagner.





DIANE is a home girl. Give her a good book and a symphony playing softly in the background and she is content to spend the evening alone. Diane is a girl of many talents. She dotes on new recipes and creating little petit point designs in the forenoon. She loves sports. A dashing game of ping pong exhilarates her for hours and, win or lose, you can always count on her whipping up a delicious soufflé or a tasty dish of truffles afterward. Diane has one vice though—solitaire. She knows forty-seven ways to play this game and believe it or not, has never once been known to cheat. Truly, Diane is a girl among girls.

photography by Bruce Prentice

by JAMES PURDY

He was trying to assert himself--

--she to stifle his manhood



MRS. ZELLER opposed her son's beard. She was in her house in Florida when she saw him wearing it for the first time. It was as though her mind had come to a full stop. This large full-bearded man entered the room and she remembered always later how ugly he had looked and how frightened she felt seeing him in the house; then the realization it was someone she knew, and finally the terror of recognition.

He had kissed her, which he didn't often do, and she recognized in this his attempt to make her discomfort the more painful. He held the beard to her face for a long time, then he released her as though she had suddenly disgusted him.

"Why did you do it?" she asked. She was, he saw, almost broken by the recognition.

"I didn't dare tell you and come."

"That's of course true," Mrs. Zeller said. "It would have been worse. You'll have to shave it off, of course. Nobody must see you. Your father of course didn't have the courage to warn me, but I knew something was wrong

# Cutting Edge

the minute he entered the house ahead of you. I suppose he's upstairs laughing now. But it's not a laughing matter."

Mrs. Zeller's anger turned against her absent husband as though all error began and ended with him. "I suppose he likes it." Her dislike of Mr. Zeller struck her son as staggeringly great at that moment.

He looked at his mother and was surprised to see how young she was. She did not look much older than he did. Perhaps she looked younger now that he had his beard.

"I had no idea a son of mine would do such a thing," she said. "But why a beard, for heaven's sake," she cried, as though he had chosen something permanent and irreparable which would destroy all that they were.

"Is it because you are an artist? No, don't answer me," she commanded. "I can't stand to hear any explanation from you. . . ."

"I have always wanted to wear a beard," her son said. "I remember wanting one as a child."

"I don't remember that at all," Mrs. Zeller said.

"I remember it quite well. I was in the summer house

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"You bore me. Mind if I fall asleep with you?"

near that old broken-down wall and I told Ellen Whitelaw I wanted to have a beard when I grew up."

"Ellen Whitelaw, that big fat stupid thing I haven't thought of her in years."

Mrs. Zeller was almost as much agitated by the memory of Ellen Whitelaw as by her son's beard.

"You didn't like Ellen Whitelaw," her son told her, trying to remember how they had acted when they were together.

"She was a common and ineffectual servant," Mrs. Zeller said, more quietly now, masking her feelings from her son.

"I suppose he liked her," the son pretended surprise, the cool cynical tone coming into his voice.

"Oh, your father," Mrs. Zeller said.

"Didn't he then?" the son asked.

"Didn't he like all of them?" she asked. The beard had changed this much already between them, she talked to him now about his father's character, while the old man stayed up in the bedroom fearing a scene.

"Didn't he always," she repeated, as though appealing to this new hirsute man.

"So," the son said, accepting what he already knew.

"Ellen Whitelaw, for God's sake," Mrs. Zeller said. The name of the servant girl brought back many other faces and faces and rooms served to make the bearded man who stared at her less and less the boy she remembered in the days of Ellen Whitelaw.

"You must shave it off," Mrs. Zeller said.

"What makes you think I would do that?" the boy wondered.

"You heard me. Do you want to drive me out of my mind?"

"But I'm not going to. Or rather it's not going to."

"I will appeal to him, though a lot of good it will do," Mrs. Zeller said. "He ought to do something once in twenty years at least."

"You mean," the son said laughing, "he hasn't done anything in that long."

"Nothing I can really remember," Mrs. Zeller told him.

"It will be interesting to hear you appeal to him," the boy said. "I haven't heard you do that in such a long time."

"I don't think you ever heard me."

"I did, though," he told her. "It was in the days of Ellen Whitelaw again, in fact."

"In those days," Mrs. Zeller wondered. "I don't see how that could be."

"Well, it was. I can remember that much."

"You couldn't have been more than four years old. How could you remember then?"

"I heard you say to him, *You have to ask her to go.*"

Mrs. Zeller did not say anything. She really could not remember the words, but she supposed that the scene was true and that he actually remembered.

"Please shave off that terrible beard. If you only knew how awful it looks on you. You can't see anything else but it."

"Everyone in New York thought it was particularly fine."

"Particularly fine," she paused over his phrase as though its meaning eluded her.

"It's nauseating," she was firm again in her judgment.

"I'm not going to do away with it," he said, just as firm.

She did not recognize his firmness, but she saw everything changing a little, including perhaps the old man upstairs.

"Are you going to appeal to him?" The son laughed again when he saw she could say no more.

"Don't mock me," the mother said. "I will speak to your

father." She pretended decorum. "You can't go anywhere with us, you know."

He looked unmoved.

"I don't want any of my friends to see you. You'll have to stay in the house or go to your own places. You can't go out with us to our places and see our friends. I hope none of the neighbors see you. If they ask who you are, I won't tell them."

"I'll tell them then."

They were not angry, they talked it out like that, while the old man was upstairs.

"Do you suppose he is drinking or asleep?" she said finally.

\* \*

"I thought he looked good in it, Fern," Mr. Zeller said. "What about it makes him look good?" she said.

"It fills out his face," Mr. Zeller said, looking at the wallpaper and surprised he had never noticed what a pattern it had before; it showed the sacrifice of some sort of animal by a youth.

He almost asked his wife how she had come to pick out this pattern, but her growing fury checked him.

He saw her mouth and throat moving with unspoken words.

"Where is he now?" Mr. Zeller wondered.

"What does that matter where he is?" she said. "He has to be somewhere while he's home, but he can't go out with us."

"How idiotic," Mr. Zeller said, and he looked at his wife straight in the face for a second.

"Why did you say that?" She tried to quiet herself down.

"The way you go on about nothing, Fern." For a moment a kind of revolt announced itself in his manner, but then his eyes went back to the wallpaper, and she resumed her tone of victor.

"I've told him he must either cut it off or go back to New York."

"Why is it a beard upsets you so?" he wondered, almost to himself.

"It's not the beard so much. It's the way he is now too. And it disfigures him so. I don't recognize him at all now when he wears it."

"So, he's never done anything of his own before," Mr. Zeller protested suddenly.

"Never done anything!" He could feel her anger covering him and glancing off like hot sun onto the wallpaper.

"That's right," he repeated. "He's never done anything. I say let him keep the beard and I'm not going to talk to him about it." His gaze lifted toward her but rested finally only on her hands and skirt.

"This is still my house," she said, "and I have to live in this town."

"When they had the centennial in Collins, everybody wore beards."

"I have to live in this town," she repeated.

"I won't talk to him about it," Mr. Zeller said.

It was as though the voice of Ellen Whitelaw reached her saying, *So that was how you appealed to him.*

\* \*

She sat on the deck chair on the porch and smoked five cigarettes. The two men were somewhere in the house and she had the feeling now that she only roomed here. She wished more than that the beard was gone that her son

(Continued on page 57)



"It's stuck . . ."

## THE INVASION OF MAN'S LAST FRONTIER

**I**F there was one last bastion in which the male was king of the roost, it was The Western. In all other fields he tolerated women's invasion of his domains because he could always recapture his virility through the medium of The Western. But now, even this refuge is being denied him. A Western film is now being prepared in which a WOMAN IS THE HERO. This is hearsay! Obviously, nothing is sacred anymore. We have acquired the story. After you read it, men, you may want to take that trip to the moon. It may well be the only frontier left to us—for awhile anyway.

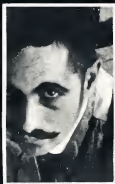
Here is the sogo of "Sheriff Nell, of Dry Well."



From the great big land of Texas,  
To the tiny town of Dry Well,  
Came the gentle Rocky Mason,  
To wed his sweetheart—Sheriff Nell.



But gambler Flint, who owned the whole town,  
Also craved our dauntless belle,  
Before he'd let Rock Mason have her,  
He vowed he'd see them both in Hell.



"I know  
the lovers  
have a weakness:  
Without gold  
they will not  
wed.  
If I can  
get them  
in a  
card game . . .  
They'll never  
share a  
wedding bed."





Flint got the pair to play him one game;  
Made them bet him their last dollar.  
Then dealt the cards and showed four aces.  
Nell had four, too—and did she holler.



She claimed the pot because he cheated.  
And that was more than Flint could take.  
He drew his gun to let Nell have it—  
Too late, he realized his mistake.



For no one in the town of Dry Well  
Could beat our hero to the draw.  
Nell warned him not to pull the trigger,  
Or he'd wind up dead on the floor.



Now gambler Flint knew Nell could do it,  
And wouldn't face the big showdown,  
He climbed upon his waiting bronco,  
And without a word roced out of town.



This is how the story ends, guys,  
Once ogain true love hos won.  
But for men who love their westerns,  
This kind does not seem like fun.



"I never go out with married men . . . can you come to my apartment?"



When the little woman says she needs a vacation—a smart husband goes away for two weeks

## TIME OFF FOR HUSBANDS

by MORT GOLDING

**B**EFORE I begin, I want to get one thing straight. I love my wife.

But when a man goes off on a vacation and leaves the little woman at home, his friends start speculating as to what's wrong.

Did she threaten to leave him?

Did she kick him out of the house?

Did he go off to make time with a blonde?

What happened?

What happened was that I'd been married to Gloria for more than four years and by all the rules in the successful-marriage books I should have been rolling in contentment.

We had a small house, a small baby, and a small account in the savings bank. We owned our own car. I had a fairly decent job with good prospects for the future. And my wife was every bit as beautiful as she was the day I married her.

There was only one trouble. Somehow, I'd lost the battle. I wasn't the man of the house any more. I'd been demoted from the boss to a partner to a junior partner and finally ended up as a grade-B helper.

That was my job. I helped.

I helped by getting up each morning, regular as clockwork, and going down to the office. I helped by sweating out overtime, by apple-polishing, by elbowing out my friends in order to get that extra three, two, or even one buck more per week. Then—like a good helper should—I trotted home with my unsopened pay envelope, letting my wife decide how to spend the money.

One minor expense, of course, was my allowance.

In between, I helped around the house. I helped feed the baby and make the beds. I washed the dishes. I vacuumed, scrubbed and polished the floor. I proved that woman's work *is* never done—just so long as she has a man to do it for her.

I was a general handyman and outside helper, too. I repaired the plumbing and kept the roof in good condition. I painted the cellar, repaired the crib and fixed the washer. In my spare time I helped keep the family happy. On a typical evening, I'd get home from work, listen to my wife's tale of woe about child-rearing and the neighbors, play kitchy-koo with the baby, and help set the table for supper. After supper I'd wash the dishes and then either sit with Gloria while she watched her TV programs, help entertain some of her friends who dropped in, or go with her to her friend's house. This last entailed picking up a baby sitter and driving her home again. And the next morning—off to work again.

It wasn't always like this.

Oh, no!

(Continued on next page)

When we first went together and all through the first few months of marriage, I was a hero. All I'd have to do was walk into a room where she was, and her eyes would light up like she was announcing to the whole blessed world that I was her man and whatever I did was O.K. with her.

Why the change?

I don't know. I'm not even sure how it started. It happened gradually—little by little, day by day. There is no single incident that I can point to, now, and say this was it, this is what made the big difference.

Only one morning I woke up and realized that I'd been demoted to a junior grade helper.

I bridled.

Protested.

Made stands.

It didn't do any good.

Old Dad is going off his rocker again.

Ignore him and he'll calm down.

Effective tactics in the male vs. female war.

I tell her that I work all day long trying to make an extra buck, spend all my weekends working around the house, and don't see why I should have to wash the damned dishes.

She sighs and recites a short essay on the responsibility of a wife and mother.

I confess that I'd rather read the paper when I get home in the evening than get down on the floor and romp with the baby.

I become a beast who doesn't appreciate my family or the wonderful home my wife is making for all of us.

I announce that I don't like her friends and would rather not see them every night.

I'm a dictator!

She decides to compromise. After all, Dad does need a pat on the fanny once in a while. Wednesday nights I'm allowed to go bowling with the guys from work.

Big deal!

When all else fails, she falls back on the female's final weapon: Sex.

If I complain or raise my voice I don't love her anymore. That night, I hold a dead fish in my arms.

Or the reverse. In the middle of an argument she'll start sitting closer to me. Her lips will be a few inches from mine. Her hands will begin to wander. Suddenly, I've for-

gotten what I was going to say as my mind becomes fixed upon one purpose.

I was caught in a trap and didn't know what to do about it.

Everything I always felt I wanted turned sour on me. That was when I decided to get away for a week or two. I wanted to be with me; with others of my kind. Maybe I could figure something out. If I didn't, I'd go off the deep end for sure.

I asked Max Rawson if he wanted to go to a hunting lodge with me.

I'd known Max since we were kids. In our bachelor days we'd roomed together. Together we used to drink, wench, and generally raise hell. He liked blondes and I liked red-heads. If a brunette came along, we'd toss for her. Every summer we would leave town for a week and go hunting.

That was Max.

He got married six months after I did. By now, he was in the same trap that I was in.

I thought that a vacation might do him just as much good as I hoped it would do me.

He agreed.

There was a problem though. How to tell our wives.

I don't know how Max managed it, but for me that task was easier than I had feared. Oh, Gloria protested all right. And very professionally, too. The (A) reaction, "you don't love me," was combined with (B) reaction, "How could you bear to be away from your wife and child?" and both were liberally salted with tears. But it seemed to me that she did it more to keep in practice than anything else.

Frankly, I think she looked the problem up in a book or magazine.

Gloria kept quite a reference library in her closet. One day, I made a brief catalogue. There were three books on child raising, seven on family problems, four on the home as an institution, and three on sexual practice. In addition to this, there were sixty-odd women's magazines.

According to the appropriate expert, when Dad wants to fly the coop for a week or two, the smart wife lets him go. Everyone knows that a man can't get along without his wife for more than 24 hours at a time. Let him have his way and be prepared to welcome him back when he comes crawling.

After all, Dad is just a little boy at heart. And everyone knows how you have to humor little boys and let them burn their fingers once in a while.

But I didn't care what her reasons were. I figured if it worked out the way the book said, then I deserved what I'd get.

So, Max and I took off.

We went to a hunting lodge about 250 miles from where we lived. It was an all masculine affair. No women allowed. We could shave or not, as we chose. We could wear old clothes. We could use four-letter words with impunity. We could even spit in the fireplace without a high-pitched wail of feminine protest.

And, according to our wives, we'd forget to brush our teeth or even eat because they weren't around to remind us to do so.

Which is tripe, of course, but the question is: Do they believe it, themselves, or do they merely want us to?

I think they believe it. That cannard about little boys has been drilled into them all their lives. They read it in their magazines. They hear it on the radio. They see it dramatized in the movies and on TV. So they think it is true. Or rather, they know it is true until a man proves to them that it isn't.

(Continued on page 60)



"Just what do you find so exciting about this one-seater sports car, Bob?"



He came to offer his services—and expected hers in return

## NOCTURNAL INTERLUDE

**T**HE PAIN GRIPPED EDWARD PAMPION in the bowels on Thursday morning and he vomited. He immediately swallowed half a bottle of castor oil, as was his habit when his digestion was upset. But this time the castor oil had no efficacy, and the pain grew and writhed and seared through his stomach till he screamed like a woman.

The pain continued on Friday and Miriam sent a black-fellow to the head station for help. The pain was worse on Saturday, but on Sunday morning it ceased, and Pampion sunk into the stupor of dying, and Miriam crouched by the bed with sharp knives of panic slicing through her.

He was a big bony man, and the boniness was intensified by the wasting of his pain. His hair was black, long, and tangled, and his beard was black and ragged. His eyes were black, like his hair. He had been a strong man and very silent. There had been no tenderness in him, not even with his children, no thought of anything beyond sheep and cattle and the land he had planned to master and own. He had no graces of companionship, and he had never touched Miriam save when he needed her body. He had begotten two sons by her and never had he made creation sing for

joy or subdued her dreams with delight. Yet he had been honest and he had worked like a bullock, and he had never tampered with native women, and without him she would be alone in the bush.

She pressed closer to the bed, and at the movement he opened his eyes. He stared blankly for a few moments, then, slowly, painfully, he turned his head to scan the room. With her mind peering into the mind of one who had planned and sweated to be a sheep lung and had got as far as dying in a shepherd's hut, Miriam looked and saw what Pampion saw. Uncoloured roof of strips of stringy bark pegged to rafters; walls of redgum slabs, undressed and splintery, glassless window. Clothes hanging from nails, worn and graceless; a dress, a bonnet, some underwear, a man's coat and trousers, a child's cloak. The small mirror and broken comb and the hair brush with flattened bristles. Earth floor and wallaby-skin mats. The shelf bearing the big Family Bible and the novel by Sir Walter Scott.

The dark eyes turned and peered through the doorway into the next room. Miriam looked, too. Though she could see only the table with legs sunk into the earth floor, she

*(Continued on next page)*

by SIDNEY HOBSON COURTIER

ALBISTAR

visualized the kitchen as though she stood in the doorway. The slab walls; the rough shelves and tin plates and panni-kins; the hornhandled knives and forks. The wide fireplace with the chains and hooks for holding pots. The brine barrel for salting mutton. The children's cot where it had been put when Pampion took ill. The whole unlovely crudity of the place was in her mind, and she shivered lest she too die, like Pampion, looking at it.

Not that she expected to die for a long time yet. She was only twenty, and she was strong, and, though her mother had died young by being thrown from a bolting horse, long life was part of her heritage. She remembered her father talking of English forebears who had lived through eighty and ninety and even a hundred years. No, she couldn't die yet; she couldn't die in a shepherd's hut.

She found Pampion's eyes appraising her as if he knew the thought in her mind.

"Do you want something, Edward?" she asked nervously.

He continued to stare at her. Presently he spoke and his voice was weak, utterly different from his normal slow, deep tones. "Miriam, women are scarce an' men'll be comin' after you. A young woman. Strong."

She wanted to turn his thoughts away from her. He should be thinking of God, of praying forgiveness, of cleansing his soul. She felt she should be leading him to prepare for eternity, but she could only sit and look into the pain-dilated eyes.

"Take y'r time, Miriam. There's good an' bad. Pick a good man. . . ."

He gazed at her, panting, and went on, "Look after the boys, Miriam. You'll be looked after . . . yourself."

He turned his head back onto the pillow, drew a long breath and lay so still Miriam's heart thudded with panic. Then he breathed out wearily.

"Edward, will I read the Word?"

He gave her a long glance and shut his eyes. The bearded lips compressed to a thin, tough line; the jaw moved as if setting like rock to meet death. Save for the breathing, gradually slowing, he did not move again. At midday, when the sun poured straight through the window, she held the mirror to his lips and knew he was dead.

She had been sixteen when Edward Pampion came to her father at the Hunter's Hill farm, near Sydney, and said, "The girl's ready for marryin', Mr. Hatch, an' I want a wife. I'm older'n her by fifteen years, but that can be a good thing f'r her. I've got me a job, shepherdin' down Port Phillip District, an' it won't be long before I get me own grant o' land. I'll get a few sheep together an' Miriam'll be a squatter's wife."

It was a long speech for Edward Pampion. Reuben Hatch, blue-eyed and broad-beamed, had replied, "It'll rest with the girl, Pampion. I've got nothin' agin' y' as her husband. You're a free settler like myself, an' you come from Sussex, like me, too. An' it's time somethin' was done with her. She's been restless an' quarrelsome with her stepmother. Maybe not all her fault, but I warn y', Pampion, she mabn't be a bargain."

"She's a worker, Mr. Hatch," said Pampion.

"Aye, she's that. We'll have her in."

Pampion impressed Miriam not at all, but the proposition meant freedom from her stepmother, her five half-sisters, the routine of cows and pigs and hoeing and planting and reaping, from unrelenting labor and smells and noises and never-ending bickering.

So they were married, and Pampion brought her down by packet boat to Melbourne Town, so young and raw a settlement its early name of Bearbrass was still common usage, and took her by wagon and horseback to the Broken River

and then forty miles up the river to the outstation among the mountains, to the shepherd's hut and long monotonous days of tending sheep, with a tribe of naked blacks for neighbors.

She sought freedom, and she found the long, lonely change of seasons, the sharp, lonely pangs of childbearing, the lonely grind of caring for a shepherd's hut, the lonely respectability of comparing herself with black whores.

And now Edward Pampion was dead.

She stood up and studied herself as well as she could in the small mirror. She was as tall as the average man and she was strong. She had a small waist and sturdy loins, and her legs, under the shapeless brown skirt, were long and graceful. Her bosom was deep and her skin was clear and creamy. Her hair was nut-brown and glossy, but it was drawn back to a bun at the back so that its beauty was lost in its skill-tightness.

Her eyes, set under a high, wide forehead, were a very deep blue; in certain lights and emotional tensions, they were violet. Her nose was broad at the bridge and tip-tilted slightly, but she considered her nostrils elegant. Her mouth was rather small in proportion to her face, but she liked the fineness of the upper lip. When she was thoughtful, a suggestion of heaviness came from her strong, round chin.

Now her face was heavy and dull from the strain of attending to Pampion, but she knew she was not ugly. She thought that, if she had the leisure and the setting and the opportunity, she could be beautiful. And, her fear in abeyance for the time, she yielded to a sensuous dream, consisting of vague, powerful feeling, rather than a picture, of position and beauty and respectability and cherished care. She thought, All things are possible to him that believeth, and I am young and strong, and I've never been sick. Never, even in the agony of childbearing, have I felt faint or sick. I am young, and all things are possible.

She was very weary, but now there were things to be done. And, because no response had come to her message for help, she knew she would have to depend upon herself alone.

She went out into the kitchen and threw dry bark on the fire and stirred it to a blaze, and the iron kettle began to hiss and bubble. She made a strong, milkless tea and sweetened it with brown sugar, and she drank it slowly, relishing its warmth in her stomach.

She rinsed the cup and dried it and went outside. The sheep yard, made of movable hurdles, with the small, movable watchman's hut alongside, was a hundred yards away in the line of her walk to the river. The sheep were restless and they pushed against the hurdles. She had tended them the first day Pampion was ill, but since then they had been locked in the yard, and they were hungry for the grass beyond the fence. She decided they would have to wait till the more urgent matters had been attended to.

She walked down the slope to the river. The autumn sun was warm on her face and the day was bright and clear and mellow. She looked around as if seeing the place for the last time. The river, low after summer, wound westward through a wide valley. The hills on the south side rose gently to grassy slopes, dotted with clean-trunked whitegums and more shaggy redgums and an occasional blackwood. On the north side, the hills were steep and rugged and thick, with black-trunked ironbarks and the compact gray of box trees. In the east reared the distant Alps, powder blue and smoky with early-autumn mists. There was no wind and the smoke from the blacks' fires, across the river, drifted up straight and silvery blue. How glad she would be to see the last of it all!



She turned downriver, making her way to a redgum overhanging a bend, and a Border Collie came to meet her, wagging his tail and grinning.

"Good dog, Peb," she said, and she patted his head. She went on with the dog at her heels.

She found her sons under the redgum with the black woman, Ramea, the wife of the man, Banyule, whom she had sent to the head station. Ramea and Angus were sitting, but Charles was on his feet, dancing and jumping and pulling at a rope which the lubra had tied around his waist and was holding to prevent his escaping. Charles was eighteen months old, two years younger than Angus. They were alike, both being dark-eyed and black-haired, but Charles was a merry youngster, and Angus was solemn and quiet and rarely smiled.

Angus looked up at Miriam and spoke disapprovingly. "Charles bin naughty fella, Mummy. Him bin want play in water. Ramea, she bin tie him up."

The sound of the pedgum lanced at Miriam's heart. Her sons were growing up like black children and would be no better than black children if she did not take them away from here. She bent and fondled them and her heart grieved over them.

The lubra, a lank, almost naked woman, with long thin breasts and a wide-mouthed squat face, had a question in her eyes.

Miriam nodded.

"Baal!" Ramea said, like the howl of a dog.

"Baal him what?" demanded Angus.

"Baal him die," moaned the lubra.

Angus lifted his eyes in wonder. Miriam untied the rope from Charles and sent the children to look for a possum she said was in a whitegum up the hill. The dog went with them.

When they were out of earshot, she said, "Ramea, I have to dig a grave and I want help. Is Banyule back yet?"

"Nuh."

"Will the other men help?"

"Nuh. Baal him die. Blackfella scared fella."

"But I'm all alone," pleaded Miriam.

The lubra was stubborn. The white boss was dead and, while he was above ground, no blackfellow would venture near the hut. Miriam accepted the inevitable, sighing. The bush was damnably hard, damnably lonely.

Angus' shrill hail came from the hill. "No possum, Mummy!"

"He's asleep in the branches," Miriam called back. "You look." To the lubra, she said, "Take care of the pickaninnies, then. I'll bring them food and you take them around the bend and keep them so they can't see. They musn't see, Ramea."

The lubra nodded emphatically. She would make sure of that. By all the dim gods whose instinctive influence dominated her life, she did not want to see the dead Pampson herself.

The lubra and the children and the dog were away around the bend, well out of sight. Miriam took a pick and a shovel and climbed the slope behind the hut to where a solitary blackwood tree grew. Here was a place Pampson had liked. Here he had often sat and smoked his pipe and planned for the time when great stretches of this country were Pampson's run and the flats were filled with Pampson's sheep and the glens with Pampson's cattle.

But Pampson was dead, and his dreams were dead, and the earth waited for him.

Miriam labored at the digging all through the afternoon. She did not falter, for she was strong and her hands were toughened against blistering. Sweat oozed from her and her hair loosened and tumbled over her face, and her

eyes were violet with intensity of purpose, and her brown dress slipped and hung loosely on her.

When the hole was deep enough, she went back to the hut. There was a sledge which Pampson had used to drag firewood from the bush. She took the sledge into the hut and hardened all thought and feeling. No thinking now, no registering sensation, no marking the slack jaw, the protruding teeth; no reflecting that this dead thing had had communion with your body and quickened life within you. Wrap it in a blanket, roll it onto the sledge. Sweating and panting, haul it to the grave; make yourself numb so that sweating and panting is all you feel. Lower it with your arms under its armpits, its dead head under your chin; lower it and make yourself blind to the hollow, bearded face and dangling limbs, deaf to the thudding drop you can't prevent. Take the shovel and pour in loose earth and don't consciously look till you're certain it is covered completely. Fill the hole and stamp the earth down hard against marauding dingoes; then kneel and recite the Lord's Prayer and know a horrible relief the ghastly thing is done.

She came down to the hut in the twilight and met Ramea and the boys returning from the river. The lubra handed the boys over and departed quickly, for she wanted to be across the river, safe with her own people from the ghost that would be haunting the hut this night.

Miriam lit candles and re-kindled the fire and, taking a tub of water, washed the muck from her arms and face and breasts. She set salt mutton broiling for tea and, getting fresh water, started to wash the children. Angus went into the bedroom, came out, and asked, "Where's Daddy?"

Miriam had already determined what she would tell him. "He was sick and God took him away."

The boy was thoughtful for a moment; then he repeated the lubra's words. "Baal him die!"

He wept quietly and Miriam picked him up and comforted him. He'll get over this quickly, she thought; he's only a baby and he'll forget easily. Especially, she added, if we go soon from this place.

She fed the children and put them into their nightshirts. She shifted their cot back to the bedroom and snuggled

(Continued on page 64)



"Why, yes it is. How nice of you to notice."



PRESENTING:  
HIGHBALL

This is HIGHBALL, one of the few men who has escaped emasculation by the female of the species. In an era of the decline of the human mole, HIGHBALL alone stands as a symbol of masculine strength and individuality. He eschews Togetherness—unless it's on his terms. He eschews everything—unless it's on his terms. He is our symbol. Hail HIGHBALL!

Unlike *homo sapiens*, HIGHBALL does not beat around the bush. His point of view is virile, dominant, and thoroughly mole. To help the American man get back on the seat of authority, HIGHBALL has consented to the following interview.



In the considered opinion of many anthropologists, man is the highest primate in the evolutionary scale. Do you have any comment?



Modern women assert that if men are privileged to indulge in multiple liaisons, they should be accorded the same rights. Do you think they are justified?



What do you think of artificial insemination?



Scientists plan to send an ape into space by rocket. Will you volunteer your services?



Is there any foundation to the rumor that you are completing the investigations left unfinished by the late Dr. Kinsey?



Coutouriers claim that the new sack, or chemise, enhances the female figure. Would this new style do anything for your mate?



American women run their men. What would you do if your mate tried to run you?



Authorities now state that men are the weaker sex. Do you agree?



Some men live alone  
and like it — the others  
are married

# THE CAUTIOUS BACHELOR

by SAREL EIMERL



I HAVE met some hundreds of girls in the last eight years and I suppose, if I'd pestered them long enough, at least one might have married me. But here, I am, still a bachelor, and like most other bachelors, I suspect, I often wonder why. Married men, of course, often wonder why they ever got married, but usually they only start to wonder when they find out that they can't stand their wives. They don't question the married state itself. But a bachelor can be fairly well satisfied with his own personality, looks, temper, and conversation, and enjoy his own company, and still wonder why he's single.

In this day and age being a bachelor just doesn't seem right, and the average one would probably prefer to be married. But first he has to find the right girl. This is pretty easy to do when a man is young, because any fool

can fall in love in his early twenties, and the girl he falls in love with needsn't be anything out of the ordinary. When a man is young, the urge to be in love is strong, the sap is high, and his powers of selectivity are still undeveloped. And it only takes a single "Yes, darling, I'd like to" from one of the beloved to get him married off.

But there are some men who don't fall in love, and more who keep falling in love with girls who won't—or can't—marry them. They move into their late twenties still single, and with their chances of falling in love diminishing with every passing day. For, as one woman I know puts it, "The bells stop ringing after twenty-five." Or -six. Or -seven. Certainly by thirty. Then, as the blood ceases to boil and declines to a simmer, reason takes over. Instead of rushing headlong into marriage, the bachelor of thirty or more

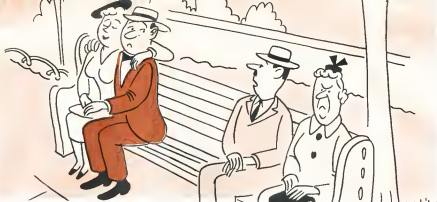
becomes judicial. He considers the evidence for and against marriage. He weighs and sifts it. And his decision to get married, if and when it comes, is born of long, calm reflection. Which is one reason why late marriages are so much more likely to be successful than early ones.

But some men never do decide to get married. There are many reasons for this. The first and most important is that after a certain age, a man's drive for marriage begins to slacken, as the benefits he can expect decrease in value. The two main benefits a woman can offer a man are (1) sex, on ice, available within reason as and when required, and (2) companionship. Consider them.

(1) Sex may seem comparatively unimportant to the husband who has it laid on beside him. But to a bachelor who has to fight for his ration, it can be of crucial impor-

ance. However, as a man passes thirty on his headlong rush into middle age, his appetite for sex decreases, and the urgent drive for women tends to give way to an urgent drive for money. It is in the years from eighteen to twenty-six that men bite their wrists at night in agonies of frustration, and shudder with desire for the pretty girls in summer dresses they pass in the streets. To a man who has suffered but survived through the bitter frosts of the wifeless twenties, the wifeless thirties are like a crisp, sharp December afternoon—nippy but easy to bear. He still wants his sex, naturally, but the price he's prepared to pay for it is slumped way down. Moreover, he has grown far more skilled at satisfying his needs without benefit of marriage. This may be irregular and not wholly satisfactory. But, with ordinary luck, it will be enough.

(turn over)  
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"Want some good advice?"

Then what about (2) companionship? Doesn't a bachelor grow lonelier as the years pass? No, he doesn't. Like sexual frustration, the loneliness of youth is the hardest to bear. After a few years, a man gets used to being alone. He learns how to make the most of his own company. He organizes his activities and pleasures to fill his vacant evenings, which are, as a matter of fact, likely to be far less vacant than those of his married friends. For single men go out much more often than married ones. They can have just as much company if they want it, the only difference being that the bachelor keeps looking at new faces, while the married man must keep looking steadily at the same one.

Meanwhile the bachelor is developing all kinds of little habits and indulgences. Not shaving on Sundays, for example; smoking cigars in bed, or playing the saxophone; doing crossword puzzles with his meals. Such habits, which marriage would almost certainly bring to an end, can become very important. Of course, the company of a beloved wife might well more than compensate for these admittedly petty little joys. If she stays beloved. But should the bachelor exchange an absorbing book over dinner for the untested conversational skills of a comparative stranger? It's a risky proposition.

And yet, sometimes, the bachelor does find himself envying the married state. If a man is trying to persuade a woman to marry him, he does well to take her on visits to his happily married friends. The atmosphere of domestic intimacy, the children sporting on the floor, the double bed glimpsed through a half-open bedroom door—all these help seduce a woman into a frame of mind more receptive to a proposal of marriage. But the same process also works on a man. The bachelor, too, notices that double bed. He, too, watches the dozing father down on the floor, playing bears with the children, while inviting odors seep in from where his wife is at work in the kitchen. Later, after dinner, he, too, looks at the husband and wife together on the couch, laughing at each other's jokes and holding hands. After seven years of marriage! Are they putting on the dog for the visitors? Almost certainly. "But still," the bachelor says to himself, "dog or no dog, it looks good." And then, also to himself, "By God, I wish I were that man."

And that's exactly what he does wish. He wants to step straight into the husband's place, complete with two chuckling children and a wife he loves; the wife who is serene and content, an accomplished cook, a skilled housekeeper, a

practiced and capable mother. But this is not the bachelor's alternative. His choice lies between his single state and marriage, not to the wife, but to the girl he has brought with him on the visit. So he turns to look at her. He takes a good, hard look and he realizes what a long and tortuous road he must follow to reach the position of the so-much-envied husband.

First he must take the girl out night after night after night after night after night after night . . . Sometimes he will enjoy those evenings. But more often he will be bored because, being over thirty, he's not likely to be in love. Then, the courtship over, he will propose. She will accept and take him on a week-end visit to her parents, which will be agonizing. Then he will take her on a week-end visit to his parents, which will be worse. Then will come the wedding itself, which, almost certainly, will be total hell. Then they will find an apartment and settle down, a process which will involve destroying most of his cherished habits. Soon she will become pregnant and need constant ministrations, which will demand keeping his sorely-tried temper. Then she will give birth to a beautiful baby boy, and for months he will get only a few hours' disturbed sleep a night, ending invariably at six, including Sundays. Meanwhile, the whole apartment will be deluged with diapers and other impedimenta. And every day they will be toiling through the constant crises which beset first-term parents. "I dropped baby on his head this morning, darling!" "My God, is it broken?"

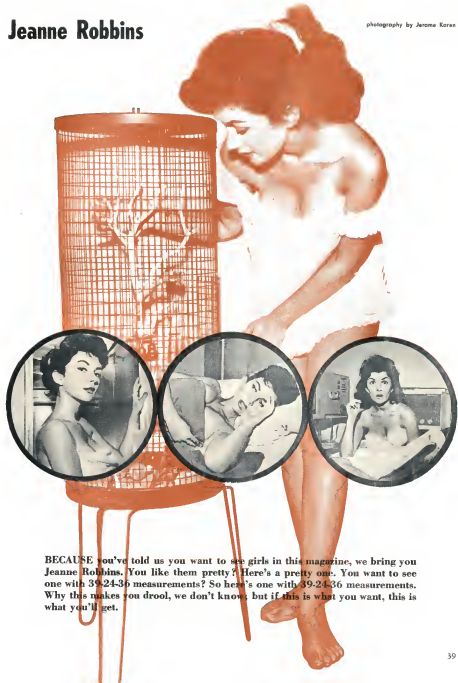
A man in his twenties has the energy and urge to experiment that allows him to take such obstacles casually in his stride. A man in his thirties hasn't. He is lazier and more inert. He has already been through many courtships, and he's sick of the whole business of going out in search for new girls, and taking them out, and getting to know them, and remembering to remember his manners, and making a good impression. The prospect of yet another trip along the old, oil trail fills him with a great weariness. Moreover, he's grown used to peace and comfort in the home, and a full night's sleep. The very idea of getting up in the middle of the night to quiet a screaming baby makes him quake with horror.

The bachelor can be aroused from his deep lethargy only by an exceptional girl who will challenge and excite him. But the chances of his meeting such a girl are infinitesimal, since each new one he meets turns out to be just like a dozen he has met before. After only a few minutes with

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# Jeanne Robbins

photography by Jerome Krase



**BECAUSE** you've told us you want to see girls in this magazine, we bring you Jeanne Robbins. You like them pretty? Here's a pretty one. You want to see one with 39-24-36 measurements? So here's one with 39-24-36 measurements. Why this makes you drool, we don't know; but if this is what you want, this is what you'll get.



WHAT you see in such pictures escapes us. True, Jeanne has a certain appeal. We haven't seen many girls with a better figure, and now that we're on the subject, her legs aren't bad either. But gee whiz, fellows, a girl is a girl. If you've seen one, you've seen them all. How far can you go into this thing?



WE don't know what good it will do you to know anything about her, but since some of you seem curious about such things, we'll tell you what we know. Jeanne comes from Brooklyn, and worked as a secretary for a while. For some reason men have always enjoyed looking at her, and for other reasons she enjoys being looked at.



THIS caused Jeanne to give up being a secretary and turn to modeling for a livelihood. When she appeared in print and others became aware of her 39-24-36 measurements, Hollywood beckoned. That's where she is now. So now you know what we know. If that makes you happy, we're glad. If there's anything else you want to know, write her, not us.





bed for a change? Or he'll help with the dinner and the dishes. Get her in an appreciative mood. Then he'll be able to use the techniques of love-making he's been studying in those highly touted medical books.

Does it work? If it worked, he wouldn't have to take his sex half-drunk. If it worked, he wouldn't have to sneak out to make a fumbling pass at other women every time there's a party, just to show he's all man; and he wouldn't have to pinch the girls in the office or leer at them at the water cooler. If it worked, he wouldn't have to read books on sex technique in the first place.

But he has to prove himself, and he has to get rid of his frustration with his wife and with himself for letting the community stamp him into a common mold. And somewhere in Swallow Valley he meets a woman at a party or at a bar who, because of her own frustration, goes for his pitch. Now he's in for it. He's damned if he does and damned if he doesn't. If he does, it's generally as meaningless as a drink gulped on the run at Grand Central or Pennsylvania Station. If he doesn't, he kicks himself for being too scared to take advantage of the situation. Either way he puts himself in his down doghouse.

The Texas Rangers had a saying, "If you pull a gun, shoot."

Our suburban male is no Texas Ranger. When he lets himself be swallowed by the demands of his community; lets himself be coned, coaxed, cajoled by the little woman into making her the hub of his existence instead of being himself the hub of hers, to all intents and purposes he has turned in his guns to the sheriff. When you give up the right to think and act and decide for yourself, you pay a price. You pay in the bedroom as well as with the ballot box. Every time you join a mob scene, you're less a man than you were before. Can our suburban male who has been unmanned by the community suddenly regain his masculinity when the curtains are drawn? Nature doesn't work that way. In the very area that he prided himself in most, he has defeated himself. And the one person in the world for whom he was willing to barter away his individuality—for whose comforts he has already bartered away years of his life—she, oddly enough, too often stands at arms' length.

How can she do otherwise? She wants him at her feet, but she also wants him to tower above her. She cannot have it both ways any more than he can. She helped to reduce him, and she pays the price of not being able to respect, in the depths of her woman's soul, the man she has forced, or beguiled, into doing her bidding. When she conquered him, she unmanned him—as when he knuckled under to please her, by stripping himself of his individuality he lost her.

But that is her tragedy, and in this article we are concerned with his.

There's a game facetiously called "Westport." It is also played in Salem, Mass., and in the Cleveland suburbs and in suburbs pretty much all over the country. Not by everybody, to be sure, but enough so that now and then headlines creep into the newspapers. But more often there are no headlines. Just words. A few calm, or wisecracking, or sophisticated words that kindle no emotion or raise no spark or release any deep feeling. The culture of the suburbs

quickly teaches the male these words. When he knows them, he doesn't have to worry about "doing something." His behavior is already conditioned, like his thoughts, which are packaged for him, the mood of his community has given him conventional words to ease him out of a spot.

And there's a tight spot at almost every party. Sometime during the evening, while the liquor is flowing and somebody's running to the kitchen for more ice or more canapés or sandwiches, some male strolls into the kitchen and sees his wife with another man, "playing Westport."

Result: no gunsmoke. Not now or later. It would not do to show any real emotion; it would be unseemly. And unpleasant for the host and hostess. Anybody so crude as to take umbrage against a little spottiveness would most likely not be included in the next party list. And what's a burning, repressed resentment against a wife or husband compared with the importance of being left out of a party? And people will talk. Not so much about what was discovered as about the peasant-like reaction of a husband who lost his temper simply because he saw another man kiss or fondle his wife, or more.

So generally there are just a few words, a ripple of embarrassed laughter, a red face or two. If that's all there is to it, heaven help them. The wound will fester a long time. If the man must remain polite, he should not bring the politeness home with him. There, his feelings should come out into the open. There should be a storm, at the very least, depending on his nature, so that the bitterness may dissipate itself. But does the suburban male do it? The odds are about fifty-fifty. Count another loss on his scorecard.

Still, all is not completely black. There is one bright cloud in the life of the suburban male. He may have abdicated his masculinity, he may be reduced to puttering in the kitchen, to getting the kids' lunches on his days off and bringing his wife breakfast in bed; he may even do some of the cleaning and cooking, and most likely kills himself every time she throws a party. But there are some things he doesn't have to worry about at all. She thoughtfully takes care of them. She may forget to send his suit to the cleaners, she may be lax about paying some of the innumerable monthly bills; but two things she never forgets:


The mortgage on the house, and the premium on his life insurance.

These two items get paid even if she has to hock his watch and cuff links. After all, she reads the actuarial figures. She knows that the pace she and the community are setting for him might cut him down at any moment. And even if his heart stands up and he lives his allotted span, she knows that on the average she will outlive him by at least ten years. A woman has to think ahead, doesn't she? The life insurance and ownership of the house will come in handy.

A cynical, worldly-wise Britisher, Somerset Maugham, once observed: "It's easier for a man to give his life for his country than to learn the multiplication table."

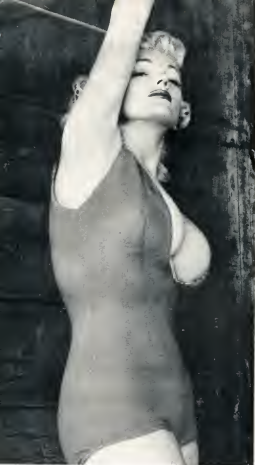
The American suburban male is fulfilling Maugham's observation. If the community is unmanned him; if his wife's dominance and excessive demands for the world's goods so she can keep up with the neighbors are emasculating him, it's with his permission. He can stop it. All he has to do is want to, dare to. But first he'll have to stop and think—for himself. But this is evidently too difficult. Better to dream. So this week end, the way he sees it, he kills himself. But next week end, or in five or ten years, he'll do what he wants to do. He'll pack his rod and go fishing. He might, too—if he's still breathing by then. ●





**T**here is a lot to be said in favor of bosoms. In fact, some of our best friends (girls, of course) have them; but judging by the way the female topography has developed from size A to D, we're reluctant to state that the boom in busts has reached the point of diminishing returns. Most men enjoy seeing an occasional 'June bustin' out all over,' but if Alice and Mary and Betty believe that the king-size measurement is all that men are interested in they are going to wind up crying in their cups. The frontal assault has had its day.

**TOO MUCH  
OF A  
GOOD THING**



Women have been pushing things too far. The race to outstrip each other in the Ekberg-Monsfield-Loren sweepstakes is getting a little ridiculous. What if another inch has been added to the coastline? There is such a thing as too much of a good thing. The bosom may, it is true, be a formidable weapon in the arsenal to capture a man, but women have stretched this weapon too far. Men are beginning to see beyond it. They have been dazzled, distracted and deluded. Now they are beginning to take inventory.



**W**omen seem to have forgotten that at heart men are explorers and they will not long be contained in one region. Their soul needs new vistas. The bosom-bound slave is ready for an about-face. He is willing to be conquered, but the bust approach is no longer the best approach. Especially if he is a derriere man.







## PARTY GIRL

(Continued from page 10)

The \$55 is paid to the real estate company each month by Helga's ex-husband in accordance with a separation agreement. There was a time when her ex-spouse balked at paying rent, even letting a month or two go by. Helga packed up and threatened to move to a \$250 a month hotel apartment. Investigation of the agreement by attorneys revealed that nothing was said about how much rent the husband had to pay. It also revealed that the agreement was unbreakable. Since then Helga has had absolutely no trouble. Acting on the theory that \$55 is better than \$250, the ex-husband keeps the rent paid up several months in advance.

Helga's father also pays her rent every month. At least he sends her the money for it. Several years ago, one of her sisters came to New York for a convention. It was a year or two after Helga's separation, and the 46th Street apartment had already been acquired and refurbished to some extent. When she heard that her sister was going to stay with her for four days, Helga went to the charwoman who had the fifth floor rear and traded flats for the duration of the visit. The charwoman was desperately poor and had nothing much in her rooms but a chair, a table, a cot, a sink, and a skylight. Helga's sister slept on the cot and primed before a broken mirror each day before attending her convention. She was horrified at the squalor in which Helga lived and lost no time in telling her father about it. After a long exchange of letters in which Mr. Darten tried to get his daughter to come back home, Helga convinced him that she had a good "career," and if she had a little financial help, she could put aside some money for furniture and other amenities. Her father has been paying the rent ever since.

Helga's roommates have also each contributed to her income. Each, in turn, has paid her \$55 a month under the impression that the rent is \$110. This figure is not nearly so exorbitant as it might seem. In addition to its central location, the apartment is now beautifully furnished.

In the seven years she has lived in her apartment, Helga has turned it into an abode as luxurious as anything on Sutton Place. Seventy-five hundred dollars has gone to purchase furniture, drapes, and general household supplies such as chinaware and linens, while another \$10,000 has been spent for appliances, including air conditioning, refrigerators, sinks, cabinets, and an automatically controlled stove. If there is anything that has been invented lately, it can be found in the apartment. The two rooms have been completely remodeled. A stall shower with its own electric hot water heater has been installed, not to mention a completely new plumbing system that brings water directly up from the city mains. A fireplace was put into the living room at the same time the place was replastered. One visitor, who has known Helga for a long time, estimates that it would have been cheaper to buy a house on Long Island.

Helga's apartment is the handiwork of her three devoted "fiancés." One of them is a prominent advertising executive. Another is an unusually successful broker. The third is a principal buyer for one of New York's larger department stores. In order to prevent any misconceptions, it might be added that Helga is "engaged" to all three of them at the same time and has been for several years. None knows about the others. It might seem impossible for a person to keep three separate fiancés in the dark for more

than five years, but Helga picked her men very carefully for the roles they were to play. They are so much alike in most of their basic characteristics that it is impossible to describe one without describing the others. The most important attribute they all possess is nobility. It is a Saint Bernard, mournful type of nobility. They are all sorrowful, tragic characters of the type who live by a code that is based on a combination of Emily Post, the playing fields of Eton, and the ante-bellum South. It would never enter their minds that anyone could tell them a lie. It is inconceivable that any one woman could have found three so completely gullible men with money, but, of course, one must realize that Helga turned down a lot of prospects before she chose them. Aside from their implicit adherence to the Boy Scout Law, each has one other thing in common with the others. He is separated, but not divorced, nor is he likely to be divorced. Helga doesn't want any of her fiancés actually marrying her. The broker's situation is typical. He has a million or two dollars. If he gets a divorce, his wife will receive a substantial chunk of his fortune, but if he keeps on as he has been living for several years, he gets by with monthly payments that can be met out of current income. As he sees it, whether wisely or not, the best thing is to maintain the status quo. Whenever one of them weakens in this resolve, Helga points out the desirability of not disturbing one's capital. She has insured herself also by not getting a divorce either. Her own ex-husband, a broker, quite often decides that he would like to settle down, get married again, and raise a family. When this particular mood is upon him, Helga packs up and goes off with him for a few days. The reconciliation never is achieved, but neither is a divorce.

It should be understood that Helga has never had improper relationships with any of her three fiancés. This was another reason for making nobility a prerequisite. Each time an improper advance is made, the fiancé gets a lecture that suits his personality. It may be an appeal to his upright character, it may be an appeal to his vulnerability in the form of private detectives who could upset the status quo, it may be a review of the couple's past relationships in which mutual respect has played an important part, or it may be a lecture on the virtues of virtue. By now, after several years of resignation to selfless suffering, the fiancés are all trained well enough so that Helga can display some affection toward them without their wanting to hustle her



"I don't care if it is your first case, Fenwick . . . you don't whistle!"



"There's absolutely no reason for you to be jealous of my secretary—why, she's old enough to be your sister!"

into the bedroom. Without any of them realizing it, they have become part of a brother-sister relationship. This is the goal that Helga had in mind in the very beginning.

Because she has kept the upper hand, she has had a much easier time than might be imagined in keeping them apart and unaware of each other. Her lunches belong to them. She eats with one of them each noon hour, in strict rotation. In addition to the lunches, one fiancé gets the entire day on Saturday. Another gets the entire day on Sunday. Whichever one is closed out of the week end gets an evening during the week. There is no variation in the schedule once it is set. Helga quiets any grumbling by resorting to a lot of different excuses and standing engagements. She rarely tells an out and out lie. Her biggest excuse is her dress designing. She has pointed out that she must do her sketching in the evenings, and she has maintained the fiction of a hidden studio to which she retires for several nights a week. In order to protect herself in the event that she is ever caught out with another man, she has invented buyers and dress manufacturers and has told each of her fiancés that now and then she accepts a date to go out with a party. Two of her fiancés had to be cajoled into being broad minded about this latter type of activity, but Helga's long-time affection for them has convinced each one that he has nothing to fear from a casual date now and then. Of course, Helga knows enough about the habits of each one of her men so that she can steer well away from him. If any one of them ever sees her in the evening when he is not supposed to, it is because he is far off his habitual beat. Usually when something like this is about to happen, she gets wind of it beforehand and makes her plans so that paths do not cross. She has said, privately, that the big secret of her success is in devoting herself completely to the fiancé she is out with at the moment. The concern for his welfare and a certain demonstrativeness dazzle him.

It can be seen that Helga's token devotion to her mythical career as a dress designer has many ramifications beyond success. She uses it not only as an excuse in her dealings with her fiancés, but also to build respect for herself. Each of her fiancés is immensely proud of her. Each one thinks of her as some sort of Harrie Carnegie. The advertising man furnished most of the appliances in the apartment. He was "helping out." The remodeling, so he thought, was something that Helga was doing out of her profits from

dress designing. It seemed such a struggle for her to accomplish this project that he delighted in surprising her with things that were readily available to him anyway. As a big advertising man, he could get most of the items at cost because they were manufactured by one of his firm's clients. Now and then, of course, on a quiet Sunday afternoon alone with him, Helga guided his choice of presents by dreaming aloud about what she wanted to do next with her apartment. The other two fiancés had the same general idea. Each one thought that he alone was "helping out."

Strangely enough, the purposes for which Helga sought out her fiancés in the first place have long since been accomplished. The apartment is now complete, and has been for more than three years, yet Helga's pleasant relationships with the men go on. These days they give her very little except the lunches and flowers now and then. Actually, there are moments when she gives them back much more than they give her. Very little of this is tangible, but her evenings and the Saturdays and Sundays she devotes to each one in turn provide them with a sense of well-being. As one of them expressed his feeling about Helga to me recently, "It is a wonderful thing to do the things you love to do best in the company of the person you love best."

The time she spends with the three fiancés represents a sacrifice for Helga. It subtracts, in some measure, from activities that have become a vital part of her existence. Generally speaking, she is restricted in her ability to circulate. In specific terms, she has lost three party days out of each week. Every success she has achieved stems from parties. Even the fiancés came to her through parties. Helga has never told anyone where she learned the two axioms for comfortable living in New York, but she seems to have picked them up within a few days after she descended upon the city. When she found out that she should locate someone to furnish dinner for her every evening, she set about the task methodically. In her view, the most important thing was to establish a wide base of acquaintanceship. A minimum of investigation proved to her that the best medium for this was the cocktail party. She began at once to wangle invitations, and, as soon as she found an apartment, she began giving parties herself, just to be sure that there were a lot of them and that she would meet more people.

She didn't have enough money for a party for twenty people, but somewhere she had met a girl who knew the answer. Right from the beginning, Helga would invite people, then ask them to bring their own liquor. She was young, good looking, and very poor. She found that it seemed to young and handsome men a very pitiful thing for a girl to be poor. They always wanted to help out, and a hint that a fifth of gin for Martinis would be welcome was more than enough to secure what she needed. With girls, she used common understanding. It was one struggling girl who was asking another struggling girl to have her boy friend bring along a bottle to help out. By the time she gave her fifth cocktail party, Helga was getting ten or fifteen bottles of liquor per evening. Only half of it would be used. The rest was clear profit.

Later on, when her stock seemed slow in building, she developed a new technique. She would invite people in for five-thirty in the evening, then concentrate on someone she knew who had a spacious and well-stocked apartment. Around seven o'clock, at the very peak of her own party, she would contrive to move the whole thing to the other apartment, thus saving several fifths of her newly acquired liquor for future use. She even had a way of getting hors d'oeuvres. Whenever she gave a party, she would pick out

(Continued on next page)



another girl as co-sponsor. Helga furnished the apartment and, supposedly, the liquor. The co-sponsor would work all day concocting showy platters, perfectly happy to be doing something to make the party a success. The cocktail party is still an important part of Helga's repertoire, but it is no longer used primarily to get liquor. After all, her stock compares favorably, these days, with that of the Brussels Restaurant.

She has always been an observant girl, and she soon began paying attention to the small talk that went on during cocktail parties. When she had a date she would steer him to one of the clubs her new acquaintances had confided they frequented. Once there, she began assembling a congenial group. Whenever an acquaintance entered, Helga would wave or stop by his table. She would generally succeed in attracting two or three couples by the end of the evening. About the time the first yawn was stifled, Helga would suggest that everyone adjourn to her apartment for breakfast or a snack before going to bed. This gracious offer would be accepted, and she would tell each girl, in an embarrassed manner, that she was out of eggs or bacon or bread. Would she mind stopping at a delicatessen on the way to pick up the missing ingredient? Helga knew where every all-night delicatessen was located and would send each couple to a different one. The store downstairs from her place was saved for her own escort, and she invariably dispatched him to spend a dollar or two. She rarely failed to net half of what was purchased on such occasions. Before leaving on the date, she would have compiled what amounted to a grocery shopping list. From it she planned her evening party, depending on what she needed most.

For a long time the emphasis in Helga's life has been shifting. She is now less busy collecting things than people. Because she depends so much on other people, she must constantly widen and change her list of acquaintances. Although she has money in the bank, and now has lunches and breakfasts provided as well as dinners, she cannot let go. She is following the same advice she gave to the broker fiancé. She is not dipping into her capital. Her stocks of everything are ample. Once in a while she lets a whole week pass without giving a cocktail party, and only has a crowd in on Friday nights so that she can lay in a supply

of food for the week end.

Helga's whole life is based upon the principle of rotation. She is smart enough to know that she cannot go on getting the same crop out of the same people indefinitely. She has developed what amounts to a routine. Her system is based on ten people, five men and five women. Each of the five men is asked to her cocktail parties with the expectation that he will bring along an extra man and an extra girl. Each of the five girls is expected to bring two men. While this may sound a little difficult, it is quite easy for a girl to find two acquaintances somewhere, either in her office or among those who call her up for dates. It is especially easy for the hand-picked girls on Helga's list. The five central men in her system are similarly situated. The twenty men and ten women who usually attend Helga's parties, incidentally, provide a desirable balance. Before any of the nucleus of her party group become regulars, they understand that the real purpose of the gettogethers is to widen their acquaintanceship, although Helga never actually explains this fact in so many words. She simply chooses people who are unattached and looking for new connections.

At each party Helga gives there are always from five to ten new men. Some of the fifteen who are brought by her regulars are repeaters. Once a new man enters the apartment, he is carefully investigated. Helga judges each one by appearance, personality, and resources. She finds out where he works, what kind of friends he has, and how he reacts to her personally; for he is, naturally, one of the prospective providers. At each party, Helga picks out the best of the new crop, and quietly asks the sponsor to bring him back again so that she can continue her investigation. The second time he appears, Helga will begin trying to wangle an invitation to dinner. If he comes three times without offering to take her out, she drops him. Once a man has invited her out to dinner, she intensifies her probing. She tries to find out what he is interested in, whether he is jealous, and whether he can be depended upon to ask her out again. Among the other things she is interested in is whether she can handle him in moments of emotional stress. After carefully weighing him and his attributes for a few weeks, and after impairing some of her philosophy



"... and please, Dolly, when they applaud, just nod your head ... don't bow!"



"Modeline! This isn't my office! We're married now!"

to him, she may put him on her list of five regulars. He then receives invitations to her cocktail parties regularly, and is expected to bring new blood into the arena. When he is added, incidentally, he replaces the man on the list who has been there longest, and he in turn is dropped when he reaches the top of the list. One other consideration influences Helga's selection. She will not add a Wall Street man to her list if she already has one, nor a writer if she has one of those. She wants variety. Of course, she is always careful to find out whether any of her men are acquainted with her fiancés. When she finds one, she steers clear of him.

Helga expects things from the girls on her list, too, but they are different things. Looks and personality are important because the girls are partially responsible for making her parties attractive to men. All of the girls who come to the parties regularly are relatively young, inexperienced, and new to New York. If one of the men upon whom Helga has a speculative eye is rerouted by one of these girls, Helga accepts the fact without too much concern. It adds to the reputation of her parties when a man falls for one of the girls and makes it just that much easier for her to get new faces.

Aside from the window dressing they provide, Helga expects the girls on her regular list to provide her with clothes. It is a simple process, brought about by the careful nurture of the dress designing reputation. If nothing else, Helga has excellent taste in clothes. Every afternoon she has little else to do but explore the big stores and the little out-of-the-way shops. When she steps into a gathering, whether a cocktail party or a dinner party, her dress always excites comment. Amongst her regulars, Helga never misses an opportunity of bringing up the fact that she is one of New York's most famous private couturières. It is done subtly and without fanfare, but the word is spread methodically. Through this word-of-mouth public relations enterprise, demand is created.

Invariably, after a girl gets to know Helga a while, she begins to hint that she'd like to have a few dresses designed just for her. Helga will agree to furnish a few dresses for her friend. The number and variety will always be determined by the financial resources of the girl in question. The actual dresses that Helga "designs" are those old ones that she has ceased wearing. She is very careful not to give a girl any that she has worn since the girl joined the group.

The proceeds from this sale go to pay for the new dresses.

Now and then an outsider—one of the girls who has been told about Helga by a satisfied customer, or one whom she meets at a party—buys a dress; but not often. On the average Helga buys and sells about three dresses a week. On each she makes a little profit, which she uses to buy underwear and a negligee to supplement the supply that her fiancés shower her with each birthday and Christmas. One of the by-products of this particular phase of Helga's activities is the fact that all of her five regular women companions have to be Helga's size. There was a time when there was a sameness about their general coloring, too, but in late years Helga has learned to do daring things with color on herself so that she can now supply brunettes and redheads from her own wardrobe.

The turnover in girls is somewhat slower than in men. Size enters into the picture, and so do basic attitudes. Every one of the five girls is potentially a roommate. Helga has to change roommates every four or five months. She feels that any longer association reveals too much about herself, and she is smart enough to know that her whole operation would be jeopardized if certain information got into general circulation. Being Helga's roommate is, on the whole, a rewarding experience. Any girl who comes to live in the apartment on 46th Street has access to food, liquor, good clothes, and attractive men. In all the ten years since she came to New York, Helga's only dissatisfied roommate was her husband. Like the others, he lasted about four months.

Helga has two or three intimate friends who know how she lives. They are girls who, for a time, used some variation of her methods. All of them have given up, however, maintaining that it is hard work and nerve wracking. One of them has taken a good job, the other two have married wealthy husbands. Whenever they meet her for a drink, they try to get Helga to live some other way. Lately, all other arguments having failed, they point out that she is getting old. She ought to be thinking about the future.

"I can't understand it," Helga told one of them, recently. "Here I am, getting more money in the bank every month, with not one but three devoted men, and a nice place to live. Why does everyone want me to change?"

"But what are you going to do when you're old?" her friend asked.

"Get older men," Helga said.



"The bus is not so crowded now, Buster!"

# GROUND FOR DIVORCE

EVERY year, thousands of women sue their husbands for divorce. When they get to court, the poor injured little dolls, raise the hems of their skirts and try to win the sympathy of the judge and jury before the much mollined mole can have his say. Somehow, while his Honor is fixing his legol-eagle eyes on a dimpled knee, the husband doesn't have a chance to point out that his suffering little darling would rather listen to the radio than to him; that, in fact, she gobbled up everything on the air waves—soop operas, hass operas, commercials—as rovenously as she gorged herself on gumdrops and no col goodies. Or he could tell a sad tale of how, dissatisfied with the stipend he brought home from a rugged week's work, she tore up Uncle Sam's good green lettuce. And, to cop his woes, he could recite an unhappy account of how the object of his desires often preferred the Pekingese to cuddle against her curves while he snuggled, lonely and frustrated, with himself on the floor. But occasionally, the outcome of divorce cases has favored the mon. In fact, some men have managed to collect olimony—for which we say Amen. Here are some of the grounds on which they collected.





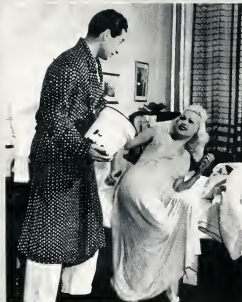
You would think that Herman J., of Wichita, Kansas, would be a hoppy man since his wife performed a strip tease for him each evening. The trouble was, he discovered that she performed for others, too. Divorce granted.



John R., of Saddle River, N. J., didn't mind modeling for the dresses his wife made, but when she claimed he seemed more at home in them than she did, he felt it was time to sever the marital knot. Divorce granted.



Oliver Y., of Tray, N. Y., told his wife the truth about her cooking. She retorted, as shown above. The judge tasted the evidence. Decision pending till his Hanar is discharged from the hospital.



Joy P., of Rye, Texas, wanted out from her marriage because husband poured water on her nightly. Husband acted not to cool her off but, to halt continually rising fire insurance premiums. Divorce denied.



Ruth C., of Akron, O., sued on the grounds that her husband placed a board with nails between them. Defendant countered he acted in self-defense against creams, lotions, oils she insisted on wearing to bed. Divorce denied.



Arnie B., Solem, Wis., had a desire for everything his wife fed him—except herself. He often wondered why. Then he discovered she seasoned the food with saltpeter. Divorce granted.



Mel Q., of Flitch, Ark., was willing to play bridge every night, but not till four in the morning. He had to get to work at three. Result: no sleep, no love, no nothin'. Divorce granted.





"Sold to the man who whistled!"



## CUTTING EDGE

(Continued from page 17)

had never mentioned Ellen Whitelaw. She found herself thinking only about her. Then she thought that now twenty years later she could not have afforded a servant, not even her.

She supposed the girl was dead. She did not know why, but she was sure she was.

She thought also that she should have mentioned her name to Mr. Zeller. It might have broken him down about the beard, but she supposed not. He had been just as adamant and unfeeling with her about the girl as he was now about her son.

Her son came through the house in front of her without speaking, dressed only in his shorts and, when he had got safely beyond her in the garden, he took off those so that he was completely naked with his back to her, and lay down in the sun.

She held the cigarette in her hand until it began to burn her finger. She felt she should not move from the place where she was and yet she did not know where to go inside the house and she did not know what pretext to use for going inside.

In the brilliant sun his body, already tanned, matched his shining black beard.

She wanted to appeal to her husband again and she knew then she could never again. She wanted to call a friend and tell her but she had no friend to whom she could tell this.

The events of the day, like a curtain of extreme bulk, cut her off from her son and husband. She had always ruled the house and them even during the awful Ellen Whitelaw days and now as though they did not even recognize her, they had taken over. She was not even here. Her son could walk naked with a beard in front of her as though she did not exist. She had nothing to fight them with, nothing to make them see with. They ignored her as Mr. Zeller had when he looked at the wallpaper and refused to discuss their son.

\* \*

"You can grow it back when you're in New York," Mr. Zeller told his son.

He did not say anything about his son lying naked before him in the garden but he felt insulted almost as much as his mother had, yet he needed his son's permission and consent now and perhaps that was why he did not mention the insult of his nakedness.

"I don't know why I have to act like a little boy all the time with you both."

"If you were here alone with me you could do anything you wanted. You know I never asked anything of you. . . ."

When his son did not answer, Mr. Zeller said, "Did I?"

"That was the trouble," the son said.

"What?" the father wondered.

"You never wanted anything from me and you never wanted to give me anything. I didn't matter to you."

"Well, I'm sorry," the father said doggedly.

"Those were the days of Ellen Whitelaw," the son said in tones like the mother.

"For God's sake," the father said and he put a piece of grass between his teeth.

He was a man who kept everything down inside of him, everything had been tied and fastened so long there was no part of him any more that could struggle against the stricture of his life.

There were no words between them for some time; then Mr. Zeller could hear himself bringing the question out: "Did she mention that girl?"

"Who?" The son pretended blankness.

"Our servant."

The son wanted to pretend again blankness but it was too much work. He answered: "No, I mentioned it. To her surprise."

"Don't you see how it is?" the father went on to the present. "She doesn't speak to either of us now and if you're still wearing the beard when you leave it's me she will be punishing six months from now."

"And you want me to save you from your wife?"

"Bobby," the father said, using the childhood tone and inflection. "I wish you would put some clothes on too when you're in the garden. With me it doesn't matter, you could do anything. I never asked you anything. But with her. . . ."

"God damn her," the boy said.

The father could not protest. He pleaded with his eyes at his son.

The son looked at his father and he could see suddenly also the youth hidden in his father's face. He was young like his mother. They were both young people who had learned nothing from life, were stopped and drifting where they were twenty years before with Ellen Whitelaw. Only *she*, the son thought, must have learned from life, must have gone on to some development in her character, while they had been tied to the shore where she had left them.

"Imagine living with someone for six months and not speaking," the father said as if to himself. "That happened once before, you know, when you were a little boy."

"I don't remember that," the son said, some concession. "I believe this is the only thing I ever asked of you," the father said. "Isn't that odd, I can't remember ever asking you anything else. Can you?"

The son looked coldly away at the sky and then answered, contempt and pity struggling together. "No, I can't."

"Thank you, Bobby," the father said.

"Only don't *plead* any more, for Christ's sake." The son turned from him.

"You've only two more days with us, and if you shaved it off and put on just a few clothes, it would help me through the year with her."

He spoke as though it would be his last year.

"Why don't you beat some sense into her?" The son turned to him again.

The father's gaze fell for the first time complete on his son's nakedness.

\* \*

Bobby had said he would be painting in the storeroom and she could send up a sandwich from time to time, and Mr. and Mrs. Zeller were left downstairs together. She refused to allow her husband to answer the phone.

In the evening Bobby came down dressed carefully and his beard combed immaculately and looking, they both thought, curled.

They talked about things like horse racing, in which they were all somehow passionately interested, but which

(Continued on next page)



they now discussed irritably as though it too were a menace to their lives. They talked about the uselessness of art and why people went into it with a detachment that would have made an outsider think that Bobby was as unconnected with it as a jockey or oil magnate. They condemned nearly everything and then the son went upstairs and they saw one another again briefly at bedtime.

The night before he was to leave they heard him up all hours, the water running, and the dropping of things made of metal.

Both parents were afraid to get up and ask him if he was all right. He was like a wealthy relative who had commanded them never to question him or interfere with his movements even if he was dying.

He was waiting for them at breakfast, dressed only in his shorts but he looked more naked than he ever had in the garden because his beard was gone. Over his chin lay savage and profound scratches as though he had removed the hair with a hunting knife and pincers.

Mrs. Zeller held her breast and turned to the coffee and Mr. Zeller said only his son's name and sat down with last night's newspaper.

"What time does your plane go?" Mrs. Zeller said in a dead, muffled voice.

The son began putting a white paste on the scratches of his face and did not answer.

"I believe your mother asked you a question," Mr. Zeller said, pale and shaking.

"Ten-forty," the son replied.

The son and the mother exchanged glances and he could see at once that his sacrifice had been in vain: she would also see the beard there again under the scratches and the gasches he had inflicted on himself, and he would never really be her son again. Even for his father it must be much the same. He had come home as a stranger who despised them and he had shown his nakedness to both of them. All three longed for separation and release.

But Bobby could not control the anger coming up in him, and his rage took an old form. He poured the coffee into his saucer because Mr. Zeller's mother had always done this and it had infuriated Mrs. Zeller because of its low-class implications.

He drank viciously from the saucer, blowing loudly.

Both parents watched him helplessly like insects sud-

denly swept against the screen.

"It's not too long till Christmas," Mr. Zeller brought out. "We hope you'll come back for the whole vacation."

"We do," Mrs. Zeller said in a voice completely unlike her own.

"So," Bobby began, but the torrent of anger would not let him say the thousand fierce things he had ready.

Instead, he blew savagely from the saucer and spilled some onto the chaste white summer rug below him. Mrs. Zeller did not move.

"I would invite you to New York," Bobby said quietly now, "but of course I will have the beard there and it wouldn't work for you."

"Yes," Mr. Zeller said, incoherent.

"I do hope you don't think I've been . . ." Mrs. Zeller cried suddenly, and they both waited to hear whether she was going to weep or not, but she stopped herself perhaps by the realization that she had no tears and that the feelings which had come over her about Bobby were likewise spent.

"I can't think of any more I can do for you," Bobby said suddenly.

They both stared at each other as though he had actually left and they were alone at last.

"Is there anything more you want me to do?" he said, coldly vicious.

They did not answer.

"I hate and despise what both of you have done to yourselves, but the thought that you would be sitting here in your middle-class crap not speaking to one another is too much even for me. That's why I did it, I guess, and not out of any love. I didn't want you to think that."

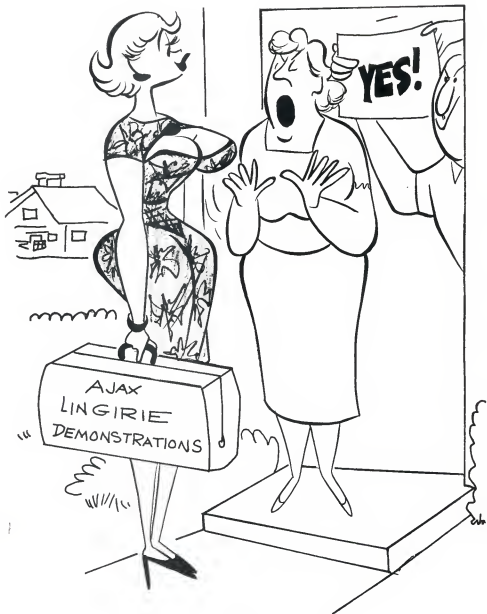
He sloshed in the saucer.

"Bobby," Mr. Zeller said.

The son brought out his *Wbat?* with such finished beauty of coolness that he paused to admire his own control and mastery.

"Please, Bobby," Mr. Zeller said.

They could all three of them hear a thousand speeches. The agony of awkwardness was made unendurable by the iciness of the son, and all three paused under this glacial control which had come to him out of art and New York, as though it was the fruit of their lives and the culmination of their twenty years.



"No!"



## TIME OFF FOR HUSBANDS

(Continued from page 26)

At any rate, the lodge was terrific.

My first morning there, I was up at five-thirty.

At home, I objected to rising at seven, but here it was different. Just stepping outside into the cool of the morning and walking through wet grass made me feel good to be alive.

Max and I slung our guns over our shoulders. We were hunting again. The primitive thrill of the sport raced through our veins and our hearts beat faster and our senses came alive. It wouldn't matter if we actually bagged anything or not. We felt like men again, doing a man's job.

That night we stayed at the lodge and played poker.

The stakes weren't high, but I got the same sort of kick from the game that I had earlier in the field. Once again, it was the doing that counted. Five guys sitting around a big wooden table, smoking fifteen cent cigars and playing a lousy two cent limit poker game—and having the time of our lives! I was the "big" winner at fifty cents. And I felt every bit as good about it as I did picking up fifty bucks or so in an all night game when I was in the Army.

We left the lodge only two evenings. There was a resort hotel nearby with a pretty nice bar. Back in my bachelor days, I used to drop in there to try and pick up a chick. I asked Max if he'd like to take a run down for old time's sake. He said O.K. so we shaved and went.

It was fun. We swapped a few off-color jokes with the bartender and sipped our bourbon. Suddenly Max gave me the wink and my eye followed his.

A couple of girls were looking us over from a table across the room. Just for kicks, I smiled at them.

They walked over, introduced themselves, and sat down. I felt a knee rub against mine.

The way Max looked, I had a hunch the same thing was happening to him.

This was something we hadn't experienced in a long time: Girls who talked and acted as if we were men—not mama's little helpers.

Neither one of us had any idea of seriously trying to make out. But it was fun to realize the possibility existed.

Both girls were well made and easy to talk to. One of them, Fay, reminded me of Gloria before we were married. Under her influence I began to come alive in ways that I had almost forgotten.

Let me give an example. When I first met Gloria, I used to stay awake half the night trying to figure out what she looked like under her clothes. Any man will do that with a girl he's interested in. It's a personal thing and he'll punch another guy in the nose for thinking the same thoughts. But he can't help thinking them himself.

But after four years of marriage, I'd seen my wife in every combination of dress and undress there is. She would wander around in nothing but hair-curlers and face cream, paying no more attention to me than she would to a female attendant in a girl's locker room. To put it mildly, there was no more mystery left.

With Fay, however, I began to play that old game again. I glanced slyly at the places where her blouse curved outwards, for instance, and tried to imagine the same spots without the blouse. It was invigorating fun.

But more than that. I was beginning to realize something I'd forgotten. I was a man, and I had growing confidence in my own manhood.

I was grateful to Fay, and regretful that I couldn't make a real play for her. My regret was even sharper when I read disappointment in her own eyes.

Max and I went back to the bar several nights later, but the girls weren't there.

As a matter of fact, I never saw either of them again.

It was that what you call a passing incident.

That second visit we did run into a married couple, though. The male of the species looked miserable. He was thoroughly housebroken and would obviously rather have been anywhere in the world than at this resort with his wife.

But she didn't care. Or, perhaps, she wasn't even aware. She was far too busy correcting his posture, table manners, grammar, and the way he wore his clothes, to worry about a little matter like that. I felt sorry for him.

He stepped up to the bar for a few minutes while his wife was busy in the powder room. He asked Max and I if we were married and when we said we were, he shook his head slowly and admiringly and asked how we managed to go off without our wives.

I tossed off something about simply saying we were going.

I'll never forget his reply: "Man," he said. "I envy you. I don't think I'll ever have your guts!"

What guts? To tell a woman you're going to do something and then do it? I felt sick for him and for myself and for every other man who threw away his manhood without even putting up a good fight.

Right then and there, I realized I could never go back to the old way. The home, the wife were important to me, but not that important. Nothing was. If a man wants to keep his self-respect, he has to fight for it. He can't just give in.

And I had a strong suspicion that, whether she knew it or not, Gloria would love me more once I took command.

When I got home I was quick, calm and to the point. I told her what I expected from her and what she could expect from me.

She fought back, using all the old tactics. But this time they didn't work.

When she turned the sex on, I told her to save it until she meant it.

That was the crowning blow. That night she became a fish again.

But this didn't work, either.

It was the only time in my life that I used my physical strength against a woman. But afterwards I had won every battle on every battlefield. I was the boss and, from the way she acted, she wasn't sorry.

But what about now? Just what has changed?

In the first place, Gloria doesn't look things up in her library anymore. That mine of tactical information is gone. I threw it out.

Today, I make the decisions. I give her an allowance, and she damn well has to stay within it. I decide what we'll do and who we'll see and what we'll buy.

I still help around the house sometimes—when I feel like it. Not because I must, though. But because I want to. Sound brutal?

I guess it is, a little.

Yet there is one thing I have learned: Life is brutal.

Since someone has to be the boss at home, and it's a lot healthier if it's the man.

If the woman takes over, it's not healthy either for you nor for her.

As I said in the beginning, I love my wife. I should. She's a different woman, now.



HAL  
FOSTER

"SURPRISE! Congratulations on becoming engaged!"



## THE CAUTIOUS BACHELOR

(Continued from page 38)

her, he can guess exactly what she will say about the latest bestseller or the income tax. Sometimes he does encounter novelties—a lady district attorney, a lady skin-diver, a lady shot-putter. But the district attorney will be like a congresswoman he once knew; the skin-diver will be like a mountain-climber he met in Colorado; the shot-putter will be like a lion-tamer he ran into in the club car on a train to Sioux City. Does he meet a girl who is beautiful and elegant? He can remember six who were just as beautiful, just as elegant. Does he meet a girl who is witty and gay? He can remember one who used to make him sick with laughter back in '49. But he didn't marry one of those. Why then, he asks himself, should he marry one of these?

To make things even worse, while the bachelor's standards are going up, the level of what he can get is going down. The choice of wives open to the over-thirty bachelor gets smaller every week.

This warning was offered me by Colin, my English friend. He had known an English girl of twenty-two, he told me, who became engaged to a man twelve years older. Her brother had been outraged.

"What did he say?" I asked.

"She's marrying an antique, old boy," Colin said, mimicking him. "Positively an antique." And then, "How old did you say you were?" he asked me.

If a thirty-four-year-old bachelor is an antique in England, in America he is a relic. For in America nearly all the best girls are engaged by twenty-four, and they prefer to marry men who are within five years of their own age. This is natural. For they want everything that marriage can offer, including youthful gaiety and plenty of sex. Unless the over-thirty bachelor has a stroke of luck, he must resign himself to marriage with a woman in her late twenties, or more. And if she has stayed single for so long, it is fairly safe to assume that there is something wrong with her. Thus, the man who has stayed a bachelor in the hope of meeting a girl better than any he's met before, in fact finds himself driven back on women he would have rejected in his prime.

But the bachelor might still be persuaded to overlook all his objections to marriage. He might still compromise and settle for the best woman he can get, if he could convince himself that he'd be happier married than single. But would he be happier? To estimate his chances, he looks around at the married people he knows.

First at the wives. And the first thing he notices is that about a third of them have been divorced. But he makes allowances—they, he tells himself, are the neurotic, the unstable, the cruel, the selfish, the unlucky. He turns instead to those who are still living with their husbands.

What does he see? One who is complaining that she has turned into a vegetable; another who is dying to be left alone, just for an hour, away from the constant screams of her children; another who is bitter because she's left alone all day; one who seems contented; another flirting dangerously at a party; another who's complaining that she's just an unpaid housekeeper to yet another who is complaining that she's not only an unpaid housekeeper in the evenings, but also has to work in the daytime because her husband is too timid to ask for a raise; another one who seems happy, and a couple of Bovarys looking for a change. The wives'

voting pattern, it seems, is discouraging. He turns to look at the husbands.

And the same pattern is repeated. There are the happy, contented husbands, who are always quick to hasten back to their wives' company, and enjoy it when they get there. And there are the husbands the bachelor runs into at the bar where he stops for his after-work drink. One is talking about a girl in his office who will probably come across in a few weeks; another complains that his wife will only allow him enough money for one drink a day; another excuses himself to call a girl; another is saying he hasn't been to a theater since the Christmas before last because it would cost thirty dollars to pay for the tickets, plus dinner out for two, plus a baby sitter, plus his wife's train fare . . . ; another is saying, "I'd love to come but what could I tell my wife?" . . . two more are clutched hungrily around a girl in a tight sweater; another is taking down a waitress' telephone number, and three are getting drunk. Watching them, the bachelor reaches the obvious conclusion. Which is that if getting married doesn't cure a man of the urge to chase after other women, he'll be better off staying single, where the campaigning is so much easier.



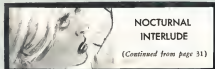
When the commuters leave the bar to catch their trains home, the bachelor leaves, too. He stops in for a leisurely dinner at a good restaurant—he can afford that. Then he takes a cab, which he can afford, back to his apartment. It is four rooms, plus terrace, in a new building; a perfect place to live in winter. The rent is high, but he can afford it. In summer, of course, he can afford to rent a cottage by the beach where he can have girls out over the week end.

After reading for a while, the bachelor goes to bed. There he lies awake and reflects. There are no children in the next room, their tousled hair and fresh, innocent faces peeping over the bedclothes. Bad. There is no woman beside him. Bad. But he is at peace. He has no worries about money. Except at work, he never has to see anyone he doesn't want to see, nor do anything he doesn't want to do. He is never nagged, he never has quarrels, he invariably gets his own way. The day—like other days—has been pleasant. Not memorable but, still, very pleasant. Tomorrow is the day for his weekly game of poker. The day after he will go to a ballgame, and later he will meet a woman he has known for years, who is coming into town for the week end. Probably she will stay with him. And he likes her. He wouldn't want to see her every day—he doesn't know any woman he'd want to see every day, or even every week. But once every month or so, she makes a nice break. And wondering where he should take her on Saturday night, the bachelor falls peacefully asleep. ●



"Well, I finally got the ending for my novell!"





## NOCTURNAL INTERLUDE

(Continued from page 31)

them down, staying with them till they were asleep. She held the candle over them and remembered Pampion's words: "Look after the boys, Miriam. You'll be looked after yourself."

She was dreadfully tired, but one thing remained to be done. She took the big Family Bible out to the kitchen. She opened it at the Family Register and looked at the twin ovals on the first page. There her marriage was recorded.

Edward John Pampion, born at Battle, Sussex, England, 9th June, 1811.

Miriam Anne Hatch, born at Hunter's Hill, New South Wales, 29th September, 1826.

Married 2nd December, 1842, Hunter's Hill, N.S.W.

Miriam turned to the page headed "Children."

Angus John Pampion, born at Broken River, Port Phillip District, 5th September, 1843.

Charles Edward Pampion, born at Broken River, Port Phillip District, 16th October, 1845.

Pain, loneliness, wretchedness; midwifed by Pampion, who had learned what little he knew by helping ewes stricken in lambing.

She turned to the page for deaths. This was the first entry. She wrote slowly and awkwardly, "Edward John Pampion, husband of Miriam Anne Pampion, Sunday, 14th March, 1847."

She put down the pen and stared at what she had written. The night silence pressed upon her, the silence of a vast, empty land; the silence that might have preceded the thunder and crash of creation. It was nothingness expressed in silence, and she was alone in the center of it.

Abruptly the silence was broken. A dingo up in the hills lifted its muzzle to the stars and howled. Twice the long, mournful cry came, and an indescribable misery and nostalgia possessed Miriam. She laid her head on the Bible and wept.

Miriam was killing a wether for meat when Steverin arrived. She had cut the animal's throat and hauled it up on the gallows when she heard the dog barking and saw a horseman approaching from the west, scattering the sheep on the flats. Remembering the blacks that morning had retired out of sight among the trees, she realized she should have known someone was coming.

Angus and Charles, who had been playing near by, crawled through the fence to her, and she had a minute when she thought of the loaded fowling piece that hung on the kitchen wall. The rider was probably from the homestead, but he need not have been. He could have been one of the despairing, dangerous men who, because they could not escape from hell, carried hell with them. The bush was their home.

He came nearer, and Miriam saw that he sat in the saddle with a straight, rigid back like the soldiers on Sydneyside. From his calbague-tree hat to his Wellington boots he was dusty and disheveled, and his blue shirt was stained and wrinkled, and his tight-fitting corduroy riding breeches were fouled by mud. He was big and thickset, and his rolled shirtsleeves revealed muscular, hairy arms. Fair-

complexioned and square-faced, he had a cleft chin and a wide, flat mouth. His hair was the color of pale mustard, and his eyes were light green and watchful. He hadn't shaved for a week or more, and he carried a holstered pistol. He was about twenty-six.

He pulled up at the yard and swung off the horse. He came to the fence, his leg muscles moving lithely under the tight breeches, and he looked at her curiously. Suddenly he showed amusement, and Miriam blushed furiously, for she was wearing Pampion's red shirt and Pampion's trousers and Pampion's heavy boots. Killing a sheep was a bloody business. It seemed to her the wide flat mouth was sneering at her.

He lifted his wide-brimmed hat, "My name's Steverin," he said in a hard, assured, English voice. "George Steverin. Are you Mrs. Pampion?"

She nodded without speaking. He made her feel inferior, and her face looked heavy and dull and her blue eyes were lifeless.

"I've come about your husband," Steverin said. "He's ill, I hear."

"You from the homestead?" asked Miriam, and she reddened again, for her voice sounded uncouth to her.

"Yes."

"Pampion's dead," said Miriam. Then she thought of her dreary waiting, of expectancy disappointed, and her eyes blazed and she spoke angrily. "Dead six days."

The green eyes opened. She was not aware of how, in that moment of energy, the dullness had gone from her face like the swift passing of a fog.

"Dead!" said Steverin.

She pointed up the hillside to the brown mound under the blackwood tree. "There's his grave."

"Ma'am," said Steverin smoothly, "I'm sorry. I offer my sympathy. No one thought your husband seriously ill. Had we known at the station, there'd have been immediate help. But did you say six days?"

"He was sick three days," said Miriam. "A fearful agony in the bowels Thursday, Friday, Saturday of last week. He died Sunday. I sent a black for help on the Friday."

"Ma'am, I got word yesterday only. I've ridden all night. And there's confusion at the homestead, too. Possibly your message came in and was forgotten in the confusion. Ma'am, I'm terribly sorry."

"What can't be cured must be endured," she said.



"... now don't get excited! This all has a perfectly logical explanation!

He looked at her with hard caution as though suspecting a hidden meaning, and again she felt the color rising in her face.

"This must be thought out," he said. "I came out to help your husband and stay till he was well again. But now—it must be thought about. Are you alone?"

"Just the children and me. And the blacks across the river."

He looked down at the boys and up again at her.

"Your children?"

"Yes."

The green eyes slanted at her. "You're very young to be the mother of such children."

"I'm twenty," Miriam blurted, and immediately was hot with embarrassment.

"I'd never have thought it." The big-chinned face was inscrutable. "Ma'am, I said I was sorry for you. Now, I'm sorry for your husband, being dead."

It was new to her, this subtlety of speech, and the implication passed her by. She was silent because she did not know what to say.

He went on, "This must be thought about, Mrs. Pampion. We must consider what's to be done."

"I've already decided that. I can't stay here."

"Obviously," said Steverin. "But we'll talk about it later. In the meantime, may I attend to my horse? He's come far and hard."

Miriam nodded awkwardly. While Steverin unsaddled his horse and watered it and tethered it to graze, she returned to her work. She gutted the carcass and proceeded to skin it, and Steverin came back. He made no offer to help, but leaned on the fence and watched her. After a while, she became aware of his eyes on her breasts pressing against Pampion's shirt, on the curve of her thighs swelling and straightening as she bent over the carcass.

She was aware of his eyes, but she ignored them.

She quartered the meat and he offered to help her carry it to the hut. He picked up his saddle bag and came into the yard and took of a side of mutton. As he swung it upon his powerful shoulders, he brushed her with his shirt, and she was aware of a strange odor, a strong, rancid, musty odor. She could taste it on her tongue and she recognized it with a shock.

Knowing the taint, she looked at him and found his green eyes gazing straight at her, unwinking, daring her to put a name to it. He knew that she knew, and she was afraid.

They walked up to the hut and Miriam put the meat on the kitchen table, and her legs were trembling.

If ever she lived to detect that odor on her sons, she would not want to live longer. And she now understood the tardiness of response to her message. He must have lain for nights with a lubra for the heavy body odor of a black to have impregnated his clothes so.

He finished eating and lit his pipe.

"If you'll excuse me, ma'am, I'm tired," he said. "I must be away early in the morning. I'll sleep the night in the watchman's hut."

Miriam checked a long, pulsing sigh. Relief softened and relaxed the tension of her body.

"You'll have breakfast before you go?"

"If you'll be so good, ma'am."

He said good night and went out. She waited till the sound of his footsteps died, then she shut the door and barred it. In the morning he would be gone, and in a few days she and the children could go, too.

At breakfast, Steverin's words hit Miriam like a sledge-



"You're lucky . . . next time, you mightn't run into a husband with a sense of humor!"

hammer. "The yard, ma'am; how long since it's been moved?"

The yard? Miriam stammered. "How long? Pampion moved it. The day before he took sick. Or the day before that. I forgot which. But why?"

"The ground is mired and bare," said Steverin. "The effect upon the sheep is bad. The yard must be moved at once."

"If you think so, I'll do it today," said Miriam. "I promise you."

"No work for a woman, ma'am," said Steverin. "I'll do it myself."

"But you were returning to the homestead," she protested. "And it's important you go at once. I can't leave here till you make the arrangements."

"One more day won't harm you," he said, his green eyes bland.

He breakfasted leisurely, and just as leisurely went out to the yard and started work.

As the afternoon advanced, she saw Steverin go to the hut. He stayed there a few minutes, then he returned to the yard and manhandled the watchman's hut into a new position. And then Miriam knew what she had to do. The hut was her fortress, her castle. She would lock herself and the children in and lock Steverin out, and there was the loaded fowling piece to keep him out.

She picked Charles up and taking Angus by the hand started quickly down the hill. But she had made her discovery too late. As she started, so did Steverin, and because he was nearer the hut than she was, he was inside seated by the fire and smoking his pipe when she arrived.

There was a new rough expression in his eyes, a new aggression in his voice. "I was wondering," he said, "if I had to get my own food."

Miriam stood still, Charles in her arms, Angus holding onto her skirt. There was another odor emanating from him, the smell of rum.

"Come, come," he rasped. "It's growing late, ma'am."

Miriam put Charles down and measured the distance between her and the gun hanging from the wall. She found the hard green eyes mocking her.

(Continued on next page)

He said, "Dangerous things, loaded guns. So I've taken the precaution of removing the charge."

Fear bubbled in her breast and burst in waves of tremors that made her legs unsteady. Like an automaton, she made tea and cut cold mutton and slices of damper. Steverin ate greedily, and the children ate, too, for they were hungry, but Miriam's mouth was dry and the food made her choke.

She cleaned the dishes and put them away and went to sit down, but Steverin barked at her, "Put the brats to bed. We've got to talk."

She stayed in the bedroom till the children were asleep. She would have stayed longer, but she could see Steverin and marked his impatience. The bedroom door was too flimsy to stop his assault, and, if she had to fight him, it was better to meet him away from the children.

She found him relaxed, sprawling in his chair. He had removed his belt with the holster and the pistol and hung it over the back of the chair. He looked at her and his flat mouth was grinning.

He said, "I won't waste words. When there's half a bed empty, there's no need for me to sleep outside."

Now that the moment of dread had come, she was suddenly no longer possessed by dread. She was angry and bitter and her heart beat swiftly and strongly, and she found bitter words rising to her lips.

"You stink!" she said.

He laughed. "What difference to you? A lubra or a Currency lass, there's no difference, save the lubra's more subnurted."

Her face was very white and her eyes like violet flame. "You are a beast!"

He stood up and lazily stretched his arms. "What an attitude—from you!" he said chidingly. "It's obvious you didn't love your husband. Did you?"

All her life, Miriam was never able to prevaricate or glide out from under an accusation true in one sense and one sense only. She had not loved Pampion, but that did not make her an unfaithful wife or a strumpet, yet, because Steverin's statement was true in that one restricted sense, she stood silent and tongue-tied.

"I know you Currency women," he went on. "Fiery! Hot stuff, like your mothers in the First Fleets. So, ma'am, stop pretending."

"No," she said, illogically, but fixed in her determination.

His eyes hardened and he moved along the table. Just as swiftly, Miriam moved along the other side. "You're wasting time," he said. "I know your kind. What about the time the wagons came out from the homestead and you played saddling paddocks with the boys when Pampion wasn't looking? Did you say so then?"

"That's a lie," she said.

They paused, each standing where the other had been. "What are you worrying about?" he demanded. "Virtue? Respectability? What's that when there's no one to respect you? We're alone. Who knows or cares?"

She thought, I can reach the door in one jump from here. Then she remembered the children, and she shrank from contemplation of what his violence might do to them.

He looked into her mind and grinned. "I thought of the door, so I barred it."

She turned to look and saw the door was barred, and, while she was staring at it, he hurried along the table and his hands clutched at her. She tried to pull away too late. His great muscular arms were around her, crushing her against his body, his rum-laden breath hot on her face. He held her with one hand. With the other, he took hold of her dress and tore it from neck to waist. He ripped at her chemise and laid her bosom bare.

She was quiet for a moment, and he savored the softness of her breasts. Then she fought frantically.

"You're going to know you've had a man," he panted. "If you don't stop fighting, I'll hit you. I'll belt you till all the fight's gone. What's it to be?"

His thumb dug into her throat and she screamed. It seemed as if there was an echo to her scream. Steverin stood still, his head turned. Miriam turned, too, and saw Angus in the bedroom doorway, his eyes big and dark and frightened. She heard Charles crying and her heart turned over.

Angus pattered towards them on his bare feet, screaming unintelligibly. Miriam cried to him to go back, but he came on and flung his arms around Steverin's leg and bit through the corduroy.

"Little bastard!" snarled Steverin. He reached down, seized Angus, and hurled him against the wall. The boy dropped to the floor and lay still. There were tears in his eyes, and terror, but also a fierce, animal hate that made Miriam think of Pampion squaring his jaw to die. There was the same strong, relentless spirit.

The thought was through her mind like a flash, and then she was thinking of something else, discovering that to deal with Angus, Steverin had had to release one of her arms. Her free hand darted quickly, blindly, against the back of a chair, touched something that moved, and with a shock she recognized the smooth feel of Steverin's belt. Her hand groped down and located the pistol. She jerked it out of the holster, turned it against Steverin, and fired. Because of the way he was holding her, she could not raise the pistol, and so the bullet burned into his thigh. He staggered back from her and dropped and writhed in agony. She saw blood staining his breeches.

"You bitch!" he groaned. "You bloody bitch!"

Miriam snatched Angus up, ran around the table, and unbarred the door. She put Angus down behind her, swung the door in, and leveled the pistol at Steverin.

"Get out!" she croaked huskily. "Or I'll shoot you dead!"

The weapon was a six-barreled pepper-box revolver, in which, as the trigger was pressed, the barrels revolved and the hammer fell on the next charge. As she pointed the pistol, Miriam unconsciously pulled the trigger. Only at the last moment did she notice the barrels moving and deflect the pistol. The bullet flew an inch or two above Steverin's body and exploded showers of sparks and ashes from the fire.

He crawled towards the door, cursing. He paused in the doorway and his green eyes blazed back at her, so that she was to wake up at night in terror from dreams of his hate. He dragged himself over the step and Miriam banged the door after him and shot the bar into place. She ran swiftly around the room blowing out the candles. She shut the windows and brought Charles from the cot and wrapped him and Angus in blankets and sat with them in the corner between the wall of the bedroom and the front of the kitchen. There she was out of reach of all openings into the but.

Angus and Charles whimpered themselves to sleep, but Miriam sat out the whole night, holding the pistol ready. In the morning, stiff with cold and bruises and fatigue, she cautiously opened the door and peeped out. She saw a trail of blood leading away from the door. Steverin's horse was gone, and the blacks were back in their camp.

It was later that she discovered that she had lost something to Steverin after all. Her little hoard of money had been rifled and only an empty tin remained.



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